

# *An Introduction to Social Psychology*

# An Introduction to Social Psychology

Second Edition

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California State University  
at San Francisco

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***This book is dedicated  
to the memory of  
Gordon S. Lerardi***



# Preface to the Second Edition

Indications of the "knowledge explosion" can be seen in all the sciences, but nowhere more clearly than in social psychology. Part of this dramatic expansion in data has come from psychologists' participation in the burgeoning enterprise of science, but much has come from the conviction that it is within the social aspects of life that the answers to our pressing problems will be found. Few texts, therefore, are likely to go out of date as rapidly as a general textbook of social psychology.

In bringing the present book up to date, I have attempted to cover the major recent trends in social psychology. Here are a few topics that appear in the present edition, but that were not included in the first edition: the positive effects of mere exposure, the effectiveness of antiwar picketing, the Machiavellian personality, the effect of deindividuation on drug usage and aggression, proxemics, transformational generative grammar, impression management, altruistic behavior, and social exchange theory. I have also added a new chapter on social perception.

The character and general approach of the book, however, are unchanged, and the comments I made in the first edition's preface are as relevant for this one. In that preface I noted that the purpose of the book is twofold: first, to introduce the student to the field of social psychology; and second, to present him with some perspectives whereby he may develop a better understanding of both his social environment and its relationship to him and his behavior.

The first of these objectives is obvious. Introductory textbooks are expected to introduce students to whatever their special area happens to be. A casual perusal of such textbooks, however, reveals a variety of approaches. This is true among introductory texts in social psychology, as well as in any number of fields. Such variety in approaches is a reflection of the diversity that exists among authors with respect to their philosophies of teaching as well as to the material they believe is important.

What an author hopes a book will do for students determines what material he chooses to cover, and this leads to the second of my objectives: that of trying to help students understand their relationship to their social environment. An author who writes a book for a course that is a rigorous proving ground for would-be research workers in behavioral-science laboratories will select material that is heavily oriented toward research. The author who hopes that students will go on to become well-organized social theoreticians will select somewhat different material. For my part, I am concerned with providing something for both types of students; but I am also aware that, taken all together, such students constitute a minority of those who enroll in introductory courses in social psychology. Some students, to be sure, have their sights already set on the PhD in social psychology, but their number is matched or even exceeded by those who are not sure whether this field or some other is the one they will want to specialize in. Probably the greater number of the students enrolled

in introductory social psychology in most colleges and universities do not, for the moment at least, have any intention of doing graduate work in any field, and are enrolled in the course because it sounds interesting and relevant. In my opinion, most introductory textbooks in most fields treat this latter type of student as a kind of second-class citizen and are instead preoccupied with meeting the needs of the potential graduate student. I come to this conclusion not so much because of the detailed coverage introductory textbooks give to research and theory, but rather because they generally omit discussion of the relevance of either research or theory for life outside the laboratory. In so doing they overlook the fact that for most students, whatever they study has relevance primary in terms of their own experience.

It is because of my interest in helping students of all types perceive this relevance that I have oriented my approach to social psychology in the direction of the kinds of experiences and interests they are likely to have. I have drawn upon research studies that have more than the usual amount of relevance for students, have included anecdotal material, and have introduced comments and even speculations about the possible meaning of psychological research findings, especially where several studies present contradictory findings. I have attempted to do this while still giving judicious coverage to the topics that are included in most introductory social psychology textbooks. Showing proper appreciation for the work of my colleagues in social psychology, as well as respect for the interests and background of students, is an admittedly difficult task, and the reader will have to decide for himself how successful I have been.

For myself, the writing of this book has been an interesting and stimulating experience. Working and living in a variety of cultures and contexts in and out of the United States, as well as in and out of the academic world, have given me a special appreciation of how theories and research findings of social psychologists can aid our understanding of the problems and issues in everyday life. This appreciation has led me to specialize in social psychology both as a researcher and as a teacher. Teaching in particular has given me an opportunity to share some of my interest and enthusiasm for the field, and my quest for better ways of understanding and presenting material led me to write this book.

Some of this excitement has also involved my wife, Fredi, who has worked with me as a colleague in the thinking and research that has gone into this book. I am particularly indebted to her for her work in preparing the manuscript. I would also like to express my appreciation for the suggestions of David S. Dustin, of the State University of New York at Plattsburgh, who read and commented on the first edition during its development, and to Paul Reynolds of the University of Minnesota and John D. Symonds of Sam Houston State University, who suggested changes that were incorporated into the present edition. The critical comments and encouragement of Daniel Katz, of the University of Michigan, were especially helpful with this and the first edition. Among my own colleagues at the California State University at San Francisco, I have been aided and stimulated by interchange of ideas with Joseph Luft, Daniel Adler, Marcelle Kardush, Herbert Naboisek, Dorothy Westby-Gibson, Philburn Ratoosh, Shepard Insel, and Walcott H. Beatty.

# Contents

## 1 The Problems and Methods of Social Psychology

3

*Psychology and social problems* Common sense and the conventional wisdom  
Social psychology as a science The price of ignoring social factors The Green Bank  
epistle Social psychology and general psychology *Levels of Social Behavior*  
Individual behavior Interpersonal behavior Group behavior *History of Social  
Psychology* Early beginnings The appearance of sociology Contributions of  
psychologists Recent events The problem of relevance *The Methods of Social  
Psychology* Experimental methods Example of an experiment Effects of severity  
of initiation Example of an unobtrusive R R study Example of nonexperimental  
research in the field Experimentation in the field *The Rationale of This Book*  
*Summary*

## 2 The Association Motive

29

The association motive classic explanations The association motive instrumental  
explanations Explanations based on theories of instinct The need for stimulation  
Stimulation as a facilitator of effectiveness Social situations as sources of stimulation  
and tension The control of stress and tension Task performance and stress  
Avoidance behavior Other psychological needs *The Need for Structure and  
Meaning* Structure and relationship Meaning through identity Meaning through  
definition Group membership as a reference point The need to associate with others  
in stress situations *Summary*

## 3 Interpersonal Attraction

51

*Attraction through Appearance* *Attraction Resulting from Similarity* Similarity in  
attitudes as a basis for attraction Attractiveness versus similarity Similarity and race

## x Contents

prejudice. Making friends and acquaintances. *Complementarity as a Basis for Attraction*. *Attraction Resulting from Frequent Exposure*: Housing studies. The positive effects of mere exposure. *Sociometry: The Measurement of Attraction*. *Summary*.

## 4 Learning in Social Contexts

73

Others' attention as a reinforcer. Increasing responsiveness to attention. Reinforcement and learning. Social learning through imitation. Early reinforcement. Culturally determined expectations. Values and expectations. The choice of models. Reference groups. Reference groups and complexity of behavior. Perceptual factors in social learning. Reward differences among models. *Summary*.

## 5 Social Motives and Attitudes

89

Social motives and behavior. The nature of attitudes. Conflicts between attitudinal systems. *The Measurement of Attitudes*: Dimensions of attitudes. Types of measures. *The Authoritarian Personality*: The Berkeley Study. Further research on authoritarian attitudes. Related personality variables. *Social Motives Considered as Needs*: Psychological needs. The need for stimulation. Theories regarding needs. The need to achieve. Measuring the need to achieve. Cross-cultural studies of n Ach. Historical developments and n Ach. The significance of n Ach as a social motive. *Summary*.

## 6 Social Influence

117

*Social Facilitation of Performance*: Familiar and unfamiliar tasks. Brainstorming experiments. *Influence on Perception and Cognition through Social Norms*: The development of social norms. Studies of yielding to social pressure (Asch). Studies of yielding to social pressure: The IPAR Experiments. Attitudes associated with yielding behavior. *Social Influence and Altruism*. *Social Influence through Manipulation*: The price of social attraction. Compliance and ingratiation. Psychological reactance. The foot-in-the-door technique. Role playing. *Influence through Fear, Shame, and Guilt*: The arousal of fear through propaganda. Guilt and shame as forms of social control. Navaho-Eskimo differences. *Summary*.

## 7 Dissonance, Consonance, and Balance 147

*Cognitive Dissonance Theory*: Theoretical background. The classic experiment: payment for lying. Role playing and cognitive dissonance. Inconsistent rewards: distortions in judgment. Physiological changes due to dissonance. Applications of dissonance theory. Controversies regarding cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance and international conflict. *Theories of Consonance and Balance*: Coping with cognitive stress and strain. Strain and the complexity of the cognitive system. The ability to merge concepts. Balance and the acquaintanceship process. Comparisons between dissonance theory and balance theory. *Summary*.

## 8 Social Status: Its Effect on Social Motives and Behavior 169

Position, status, and role. *The American Social-Class Structure*: Earlier Studies. The middle class. The upper class. The working class and the lower class. Differences between middle class and working class. Differences between working class and lower class. The lower-class culture. *Social-Class Differences in Child-Rearing Patterns*: The middle class, as contrasted with the working class and the lower class. Cross-cultural research. Social class and social perception. *Occupational and Educational Aspects of Social Class*: Social class and occupational status. Education and social class. Attitudes toward the social environment. Attitudes toward school. *Upward Mobility*: Self-help and the lower class. Lower class and n Ach. Emotional problems and upward mobility. Emotional problems and status inconsistencies. Authoritarian attitudes and class structure. Mexican-American laborers: A static, lower-class subculture. The problem of the lower-class immigrant. *Summary*.

## 9 Social Roles 201

Characteristics of social roles. Prescription of roles. Positions and roles. Roles as learned expectations. Reciprocal roles. *Sex Roles*: Risk-taking. Antisocial motives. Prosocial motives. Instinct. Culture. Biological determinants. Interaction between social learning and biology. Status-granting by women. Changing relationships between the sexes. *Conflicts in Roles*: Conflicts for men. Conflicts for women. Role conflict in organizations. Role conflict for the "haser." Compartmentalization. Role differentiation. *Summary*.



## 10 Personality as a Social Phenomenon 225

Personality defined. Roles and personality formation. *The Self*: Self-concept and self-image. Role relationships and the self. Field theory and self theory. Psychoanalytic theories of the self. The self as a source of meaning. *Self-Esteem*: Self-esteem and evaluation by others. Child-parent relations and self-esteem. Distortions in self-perception. Flight from self. Escape from self through drugs. *Social Dependence and Independence*: Independence, self-esteem, and creativity. Social dependence and social learning. *Birth Order and Personality*: Success differentials between first-borns and later-borns. Birth order and socializing experiences. Birth order and parental attention. *Summary*.

## 11 Cultural Influences on Personality and Social Behavior 249

*Social Learning during the Early Developmental Years*: Development during infancy. Later influences during childhood. The child and the peer group. *Differences in Cultural Style*: Independence and individuality. Cultural differences in the perception of interpersonal relations. Perceiving the everyday world. Reaction to catastrophe. The culture as a perceptual filter. *Core Values*: American core values. German-American differences. Bringing about changes in values. Acculturation and n Ach. *Summary*

## 12 Social Perception 273

*Evaluation Effects*: On being evaluated. Evaluating others. Self-fulfilling prophecies. Prejudice. *Stereotypes*: When stereotypes mislead. Cross-cultural studies of stereotypes. *Empathy*. Ascertaining others' feelings and emotions. Correlates of empathy. Increasing empathy through exposure to the other. Empathy and projection. Effects of dogmatism and prejudice on empathy. *Interpersonal and Intergroup Interaction*: Contact and prejudice. Proxemics. *Summary*.

## 13 Communication 301

Communication as perceived by laymen and psychologists. Communication as a tool. Communication as a transaction. Hot and cool media. *Feedback*: Feedback as an orienting mechanism. Feedback and attribution of attitudes. Social pressure as feedback. Empathy and feedback. *Communication and Social Relationships*:

Social systems Communication and interpersonal behavior Communication and social status *Language* Language and social identity Psycholinguistics Generative theories of language Language and cognition Language and psychological reality *Denotation and Connotation in Language* Language as a source of information and misinformation The semantic differential Word association research *Summary*

## 14 Group Processes

329

What makes a group? Formation and maintenance Stability and change Social exchange theory Particularistic and universalistic resources *Developmental Stages in Group Participation* Infancy Early childhood The school years Movement out of the family group *Cohesiveness* The nature of cohesiveness Research with cohesiveness Cohesiveness in work groups Effects of success and failure Computationality and cohesiveness Adherence to group norms *Motivation* Commitment and responsibility Irrelevancy of external factors *Social Climate* Perceptual set The leader's effect on climate Roles and expectations *Types of Groups* Primary and secondary groups Formal and informal groups Exclusive and inclusive groups Interest groups and cult groups Membership groups and reference groups *Teamwork* The dynamics of group interaction *Summary*

## 15 Group Task Performance Problem Solving, Cooperation and Competition

357

Groups vs. individuals in problem solving Improving the functioning of groups through democratic leadership Improving the functioning of groups through structure *Centralized and Decentralized Group Structure* The Rely Shift *Cooperation and Competition* Formalized cooperation Cooperation in problem solving groups Cooperation competition and group feeling *Cooperation and Competition in Two Person Games* Nonzero sum games The trucking game *Summary*

## 16 Leaders and Leadership

379

*Functions of Leaders* Definitions of leadership Leadership and the power to influence Power and prestige The transferability of leadership *Types of Leaders and Categories of Leadership* The administrator The bureaucrat The policy maker The expert The ideologist The charismatic leader The political leader The symbolic leader The parent figure The leader as a scapegoat *Personal*

*Characteristics of Leaders* Intelligence Dominance Adjustment Activity Nonconformity Social distance *Structure Initiation versus Consideration in Leaders* The Hawthorne study The International Harvester study Leaders' attitudes toward their "least preferred co-workers" *Facilitating Social Learning* The leader as a model The leader as a participant The leader's effect on self-regarding attitudes Effect of the group on the leader *Summary*

## 17 *Psychological Processes in Organizations* 409

*Organizational Structure* Characteristics of organizations Bureaucracies Types of organizations *Psychological Needs Met through Organizations* Satisfaction in employment Managerial satisfactions The task-oriented individual *Organizations as Systems of Communication* The influence of status on communication Communication and organization size Communication and influence Integrating subgroups into the organization Autonomy, productivity, and job satisfaction *Organizational Change* The persistence of traditional patterns Theory X and theory Y Group decision method T-groups, sensitivity training, and therapy groups *Summary*

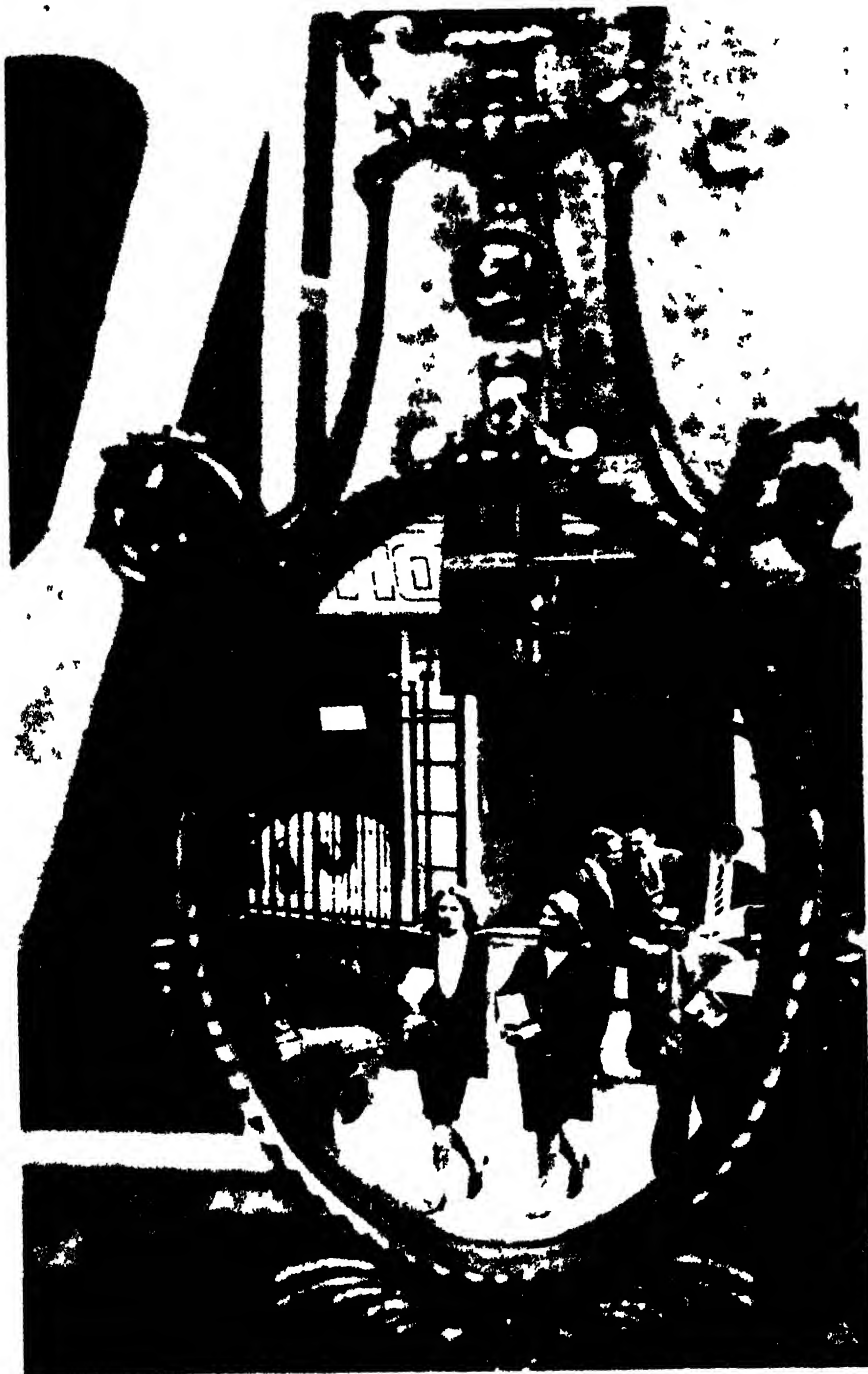
## 18 *Aggression and its Management* 433

Movement toward, away from, or against others Hostility and aggression Biological bases of aggression *Origins and Forms of Aggression* The perception of threat in infancy and childhood The stimulus value of violence and aggression in adulthood The effect of the culture on aggression and violence Institutionalized and personalized forms of aggression *Prejudice and Intergroup Hostility* The nature of prejudice Perceived difference as the basis for prejudice *Aggression as a Dependent Variable* Milgram's "shocking" research Motivational factors in experimentally induced aggression Stigma and the justification of aggression Aggression in a "just world" Prejudice, hostility, and aggression as normal behavior *Intergroup Conflict* The perception of external threat Research into the dynamics of intergroup conflict *The Management and Control of Aggression* Coping with hostility through catharsis Televised violence and aggression Aggression and social learning Social norms and control of aggression Norms of international behavior *Summary*

## *References and Authors Index* 459

## *Subject Index* 463

# *An Introduction to Social Psychology*



*Editorial Photocolor  
Archives*

# Chapter 1

## The Problems and Methods of Social Psychology

In a presidential address before the American Psychological Association a few years ago, George A. Miller (1969) opened with the following words, which we quote here as a starting point for this book.

The most urgent problems of our world today are the problems we have made for ourselves. They have not been caused by some heedless or malicious inanimate Nature, nor have they been imposed on us as punishment by the will of God. They are human problems whose solutions will require us to change our behavior and our social institutions [p. 1063].

### *Psychology and Social Problems*

Miller and many others in recent years have made it clear that the most perplexing problems

faced by man today are social<sup>1</sup> problems. This appears to be true no matter which of man's many difficulties we examine.

Let us test this proposition by assuming that biological survival is man's major problem, just as it has been throughout the ages. We have solved the technological aspects of this problem and are able to produce food, shelter, and clothing in abundance, but we have not worked out the social problems involved in distribution: getting adequate supplies of these necessities into the hands of everyone who is in need. Man's long-range ability to survive is also threatened by the possibility that the number of people will increase beyond the capacity of Earth to support them. It appears, furthermore, that our eagerness to produce and consume will result in irreversible cycles of pollution. There are technological aspects to these problems, but they are, in essence, *social* problems. Survival is also conditional on man's ability to restrain his aggressive impulses, and some people believe that the abolition of war is man's major unresolved problem. The prevention of war and the waging of peace are also social problems.

Some might say that man's chief problem is not biological survival, but the more philosophical and existential one of learning to live with himself. Man does not exist, however, as an isolate in time and space, because he is a product of his relations with others and must be understood in those terms if he is to be understood at all. Hence, living with oneself is also a social problem.

There are many other ways of stating man's most pressing problems, but no matter which statement we prefer, its main dimensions will turn out to be social in nature: the causes and

the results of individuals and groups interacting with one another. The fact that the behavior of individuals is involved makes these problems of interest to psychologists, and the particular branch of psychology concerned with the relationship between social interaction and the behavior of individuals is social psychology.

If such problems are to be resolved, or if they are to be coped with at all, it follows that strategies based on an understanding of the factors concerned will be more successful than strategies based on guesswork, impulse, or irrelevancy. An understanding of any problem would obviously be useful to the extent that it is relevant, accurate, and complete. Accuracy and completeness describe the kind of knowledge and understanding that scientists strive for. Evidence of the value of scientists' contributions can be seen all around us, especially in the products of modern technology. Man today is the master of his physical environment to an extent that few in past ages thought would be possible, and his mastery has come about through the understanding provided by the physical and natural sciences.

The work of the physical and natural scientists is, unfortunately, only indirectly relevant to the understanding of the social aspects of man's problems. There are significant gaps between our biochemical understanding of man's behavior and the understanding required to explain his social behavior. Social psychologists are working to bridge these gaps, but they work only occasionally with physiological psychologists on the same research problems. On the other hand, there is relatively good communication and a sharing of information between the two branches of psychology, and techniques developed in experimental psychology are used extensively by social psychologists.

Information regarding the interaction between social forces and man's behavior has accumulated rapidly, particularly since World

<sup>1</sup>The term *social*, as used by psychologists and other behavioral scientists, refers to phenomena resulting from interaction among individuals and/or groups, as well as to the influence of individuals and/or groups on one another.

War II Unfortunately, this growing body of information has had little effect on the policies or practices of those who play leading roles in the task of coping with the major problems of mankind This gap between information and practice is due partly to the fact that many explanations are at present incomplete or limited in scope, making it difficult for people to determine how they may be applied to social problems There are, however, other sources of reluctance on the part of the general public and its leaders

### *Common sense and the conventional wisdom*

Generally speaking, people prefer to deal with human problems on the basis of what is ordinarily called common sense or what John Kenneth Galbraith (1958) has termed the conventional wisdom

In this textbook we shall use these two terms interchangeably to refer to the beliefs about human behavior that people ordinarily turn to when they have to make decisions or predictions involving others Common sense usually refers to a body of information derived from mature experience and carries implications of hardheadedness and objectivity The term can, however, be used by anyone or any group to justify a wide range of actions, some of them quite irrational Common sense is used, for example, to justify the execution of murderers, because it predicts that this will discourage crime Data show, however, that such is not the case There is little difference in the murder rate in states that execute murderers and those that do not, hence, the "common sense" of those who support capital punishment must be based on some consideration other than objective evidence What this other consideration might be is, of course, a major concern in this book, but the point here is that "common sense" is hardly an infallible basis for

making decisions and predictions about human behavior and may actually serve to conceal the decision maker's real motives from himself

Galbraith uses the term "conventional wisdom" to apply to widely accepted beliefs that may have represented an advance in thinking some time in the past but are no longer valid and appropriate The fact that such beliefs lack current validity has no bearing on the degree to which they are accepted The conventional wisdom of the eighteenth century held that a nation's wealth is represented by its store of gold bullion, although traders in England and the Low Countries had demonstrated that the way to wealth lay through freedom in trade Adam Smith formulated the principles of free trade in his treatise, *The wealth of nations*, a book that was rejected and ridiculed at the time as being contrary to what everyone knew—that is, the conventional wisdom In due time, Smith's ideas about free trade were accepted by economists and assumed the status of a kind of conventional wisdom of their own As Galbraith points out, conventional wisdom tends to outlive the events that made it valid and becomes cherished and defended by the multitude at the very moment when events call for an entirely new approach

Galbraith's examples are drawn from the field of economics, but similar examples could be found in other areas of human behavior Psychologists and the other behavioral scientists are continually testing premises based on common sense and the conventional wisdom Often they are found to be valid, but sometimes the evidence disproves them and new principles are propounded When this occurs, there is a long lag between the discovery of the new principle and its acceptance as part of the conventional wisdom An example of this may be found in the research conducted in the Western Electric plant at Hawthorne, Illinois, during the late 1920's and early 1930's The conventional wisdom of that day held that employees were



motivated almost solely by the prospect of monetary gain. The Hawthorne studies showed, on the contrary, that social motives are at least as significant as economic ones, and perhaps even more so. It took more than thirty years for these findings to gain acceptance as part of the conventional wisdom of employers, and the process of assimilation is far from complete.

Galbraith suggests that the conventional wisdom becomes a kind of rallying point for those who resist advanced ideas in the area of social behavior. Making decisions that involve other people can be, and often is, rather stressful and anxiety provoking. When we are anxious, we prefer to use "tried and true" methods and to have clear-cut, uncomplicated reasons for doing what we have decided to do. "Common sense" and "the conventional wisdom" have the virtues of being familiar, comfortable, and formulated in relatively simple terms. Inasmuch as the beliefs incorporated into what we know as "common sense" represent our understanding of human behavior, we feel committed to it and even defensive about it. People have, as Galbraith says, such a vested interest in this understanding that they react with something like a religious passion whenever it happens to be challenged. It is partly for this reason that scientists have come to mistrust the validity of "common sense" and prefer, instead, theories, formulations, principles, and information based on the result of inquiries conducted along scientific lines.

We shall, at various points in this book, describe research studies whose results disconfirm what common sense would lead us to expect. In the chapter on social perception, for example, it will be shown that neither our understanding of nor liking for people from other cultures necessarily increases with exposure to them. For instance, American students using stereotypes alone had a more accurate idea of the motives and feelings of Italians

than they did after they had seen filmed interviews of the subjects (Gough, 1968), and Americans living in Greece had a more negative image of Greeks than did Americans attending university in the Midwest (Triandis & Vassiliou, 1967). Common sense tells us, too, that most people would resist suggestions that they behave in ways contrary to their fundamental moral standards, except possibly in very stressful situations, yet Milgram (1963, 1964) has found that most people will deliver painful shocks to another person if someone merely tells them to do so or if others agree that it should be done.

The point of these studies is not that of discrediting common sense, but rather that of pointing to a need to find some better basis for understanding and predicting behavior. The difficulty with common sense is that it lulls us into the false security of believing that we *already* understand people, whereas psychology takes the approach of raising questions as to what we really *do* understand and of going beyond common-sense formulations.

•

### *Social psychology as a science*

Social psychology is a science because of the information and methodology it represents. Its information results from inquiries carried out according to methods accepted by scientists, and its methods consist of the procedures involved in making such investigations. It is a science by virtue of the fact that social psychologists accept the discipline of the scientific method—that is, they recognize the need for observations to be made as precisely and as objectively as possible, under carefully controlled conditions, to the end that their results are similar to those that would be obtained by other observers using the same approaches and the same methods.

Research in social psychology begins, as does research in other scientific disciplines, with

questions that become testable hypotheses, and, if investigation shows hypotheses to be valid, the resultant findings become the bases for making predictions. The specific ways in which social psychologists carry out research will be taken up later in this chapter. Here we show only how the procedure of social psychologists differs from that of people who use common sense or the conventional wisdom as bases for making predictions about behavior.

It follows from this discussion that although social psychologists are concerned with the same phenomena—behavior—that laymen are, they approach them in a much different way and may make predictions that are at variance with the predictions of laymen. This does not mean that all lay interpretations and predictions are invalid, but it does mean that such predictions are suspect, as far as the social psychologist is concerned, until they have been put to the scientific test. The prediction that people who have similar values will associate with one another is consistent with common sense and appears in the old saw "Birds of a feather flock together." This prediction can be and actually has been verified experimentally, as we show in Chapter 3. Common sense, however, would probably *not* predict that people would find similarity in values a more significant basis for attraction than racial similarities; yet research shows that even highly prejudiced whites find Negroes whose values are similar to theirs more attractive than whites whose values are markedly different (Byrne & Wong, 1962). This is another of many examples in the book where psychological research disconfirms the predictions of common sense and the conventional wisdom.

### *The price of ignoring social factors: The Green Bank episode*

Perhaps one of the most common errors made by people who use common sense as a basis

for predictions is that of ignoring social factors altogether. In 1956 a committee of radio astronomers, working under the auspices of the National Science Foundation, an agency of the Federal government, decided to locate the National Radio Astronomy Observatory near the village of Green Bank, West Virginia. This decision was made on the basis of atmospheric conditions, freedom from radio broadcast interference, and other physical criteria relative to the successful operation of a radio observatory. The observatory was built as planned and a small colony of some 90 resident scientists and technicians was recruited and settled, with their families, in special housing near the observatory.

It soon became evident that the planning committee had overlooked some important social psychological factors in selecting Green Bank as the location for the observatory. Green Bank is high in the Appalachian Mountains near the Virginia-West Virginia border. Its population was about 250, and the nearest approximation to an urban center was the county seat of Marlinton, population 1500, located thirty miles away. Elkins, then a town of 8000, is fifty miles away; Charlottesville, Virginia, is 100 miles away; Charlestown, West Virginia, is 170 miles; and Washington, D.C., is more than 200 miles away. These mileages do not tell the whole story, because the mountainous terrain makes driving difficult. It takes about 2½ hours to drive to Charlottesville, the nearest airport, and a trip to Washington takes five to six hours.

Several problems developed, but the major one was the attitudes of the scientists and their families toward the community. They found, first of all, that they had no one to socialize with but themselves, and that going to Charlottesville, which had a population of only 29,000, was like escaping to the outside world. Not only did the men miss contacts with people outside their field, but the women missed shopping

and complained about the limited educational facilities for their children. As reports of life in Green Bank spread among scientists in other parts of the country, it became increasingly difficult to recruit personnel for the observatory, and the decision was finally made to move the majority of the staff to Charlottesville (Langer, 1965).

Although hindsight is easier than foresight, it does appear that at least some of the problems encountered by the observatory staff and their families could have been anticipated by social psychologists. A considerable amount of data accumulated by psychologists and other behavioral scientists shows that man is an integrated part of his social environment. Common sense tends to overlook or to minimize the importance of this relationship. Decisions made daily by administrators in government and business assume that Mr. A will have the same capacity to produce for his employer irrespective of whether he is permitted to stay in Salt Lake City, where he had worked for the last five years, or whether he is transferred to Washington, Key West, or Coos Bay, Oregon. There is a common tendency to overlook the fact that Mr. A's competence on the job is to a large extent affected by his attitudes toward it and towards his employers. These attitudes, in turn, are influenced by all segments of his social environment, and particularly by the attitudes and feelings of Mrs. A. Mr. A may or may not perform as adequately in Key West as he did in Salt Lake City, but it is a mistake to assume that his feelings toward his job, his employer, his future, and his everyday experiences will be the same in both places. The more unfamiliar the new environment, the greater the dislocation will be.

In the Green Bank episode, it is quite likely that many of the scientist-administrators believed that astronomers would do an even *better* job in Green Bank, because there would

be less interference in the form of the "outside disturbances" ordinarily found in an urban area. The common-sense idea that "the fewer the distractions, the better the job" has some short-range validity, but it overlooks the fact that once the day's (or night's) work is over, even dedicated scientists find distractions pleasantly stimulating.

### *Social psychology and general psychology*

All psychology is concerned directly or indirectly with the behavior of the individual organism, and it is this focus on the individual that puts the "psychology" into social psychology." Social psychology differs from other branches of psychology in its emphasis as well as the scope of its investigation and theory building. There is, admittedly, some overlap between social psychology and other specialties in the general field of psychology. Robert J. Zajonc (1966) points out that psychologists interested in problems of learning study behavior as influenced by practice and reinforcement; psychologists interested in perception study behavior as modified by changes in physical stimuli; whereas psychologists interested in motivation are concerned with antecedent states of deprivation or arousal in the organism. Although these psychologists are all in different fields, they may nevertheless study the same set of responses. A rat's turning left in a T maze, for instance, may be studied in terms of the number of reinforced trials (learning), the physical properties of the maze's left or right arm (perception), or the animal's hunger level (motivation). But if all these variables are held constant, and we observe the rat turning left when there is a second rat in the right arm of the maze, we become, as Zajonc puts it, social psychologists.

Social psychology is concerned with the behavioral processes, causal factors, and results

of interaction<sup>2</sup> among persons and groups. Interaction may be investigated either as an ongoing event or in terms of antecedent or subsequent events. Any or all of these types of events may be studied on three different levels or dimensions: individual behavior, interpersonal behavior, and group behavior. It is not always clear which level or dimension is being studied. When we say that a certain group rates high in responsibility, we may be talking about the value system of the individuals (first level) who comprise the group. If this value system is reflected in the social behavior of the members, as it is likely to be, it will very probably appear in some form characteristic of the group members as they interact with one another and with people who are nonmembers (second level). If such behavior is indeed characteristic of the group, it will be what is termed a "social norm." It is also quite possible that when this group interacts as a group with other groups (third level), its behavior is still characterized by a high level of responsibility. Hence, to say that a group's behavior is marked by a high degree of responsibility (or any other behavioral trait) is to suggest something about behavior at all three levels.

## *Levels of Social Behavior*

### *Individual behavior*

The behavior of individuals may be studied in terms of the attitudes, values, beliefs, and habits characteristic of certain individuals or of individuals in general. Social psychologists are

likely to be more interested in individuals-in-general, because they are interested in human behavior in general. An understanding of the general principles of human behavior enables us to make better predictions about individuals, whereas an analysis of the behavior of a single individual may yield data relevant only to that individual. Slight differences or changes in behavior on the part of one or two individuals may have little value, as far as developing any general theories of behavior are concerned, but small variations may assume a high degree of significance if displayed by all or most people in a rather large sample. Social psychologists, like other behavioral scientists, are continually on the alert for indications of basic trends and consistencies in human behavior, and such trends are usually revealed more accurately or reliably by observing sizable samples of individuals rather than a few isolated individuals.

Let us say that we are interested in what happens to the attitudes of students who attend college and decide to focus on changes in ethnocentrism, or race prejudice, as it is more popularly known. For the purpose of our study, we select samples of 100 members of each freshman class entering a university for five successive years. Nine years later, when we terminate our data gathering, we find that the students made a mean score of 50 on our ethnocentrism scale when they were freshmen, and 45 when they were seniors. If instead of reporting our results for the combined group of students we had reported the results for each student separately, the result would be somewhat confusing, for we would have a random list of 500 paired scores. In some instances the scores made as seniors would be higher than those made as freshmen, in some instances lower, and in other instances the same. The mean or average score for the combined group is really a composite score of the individuals

<sup>2</sup>The term *interaction* is used in social psychology to refer to the mutual or reciprocal way in which individuals and/or groups influence one another's behavior, whereby the behavior of an individual or group becomes a stimulus that evokes responses from others.

who comprise the group. Furthermore, a mean drop of five points might be overlooked if all scores for individuals were reported separately, but computing a pair of statistics, that represent the composite attitudinal status of the groups at two points in time, enables us to recognize that a change has probably taken place among most of the individuals in the group. By computing the necessary statistics, we can determine whether the observed difference is due to chance or whether it is statistically significant to the point that chance is extremely unlikely. In any event, we should recognize that differences between the "before" and "after" scores reflect changes in behavior or attitudes that took place at the first or individual level and are only indirectly related to interpersonal or intergroup changes.

It is common practice in social psychology, as well as in other branches of psychology, to report findings based on samples consisting of a number of subjects, rather than on separate individuals. In the example given, social psychologists are likely to be more interested in the fact that the ethnocentrism scores of, say, half the students declined, rather than the fact that a third actually increased. The students showing increases might be useful as subjects in another kind of study—one undertaken to determine, for example, the characteristics of students who show countertrend changes and become more prejudiced during their stay in college. But even such research would be concerned with the discovery of general principles rather than the highly individual or unique experiences of a series of students, because the object of such a study would be that of finding out what general conditions (for example, child-rearing experiences) are related to the behavior of students who become more prejudiced when exposed to the kinds of forces that cause most students to become less prejudiced.

We should also note that the prediction of

behavior for an individual is more hazardous than prediction for a group, even when we have data based on normative trends. Again referring to the foregoing example, we would predict that another freshman class going through the same university would become less prejudiced during the four-year period. If conditions had not changed very much (same faculty, same curriculum, and a relatively stable political environment), the results should be somewhat the same. Suppose the original study actually has shown that one-third of the freshman class *increased* their ethnocentrism scores. This would lead us to predict that a sizable minority of the new freshman class would also show an increase in scores during the next four years. Richard Whitmore is a freshman in an incoming class. If his class has approximately the same experience as the classes that took part in the study, we might rate his chances of becoming less prejudiced as 50%, becoming more prejudiced as 33%, and showing no change as 17%. But unless further research has turned up data to suggest why some students resist the anti-prejudice trend, we cannot really say with very much confidence into which of the three groups he will fall. However, we can predict with a great deal more assurance that, as a group, the members of this year's freshman class will show a decline in ethnocentrism.

None of this should prevent us from using the data of social psychology to understand, explain, and predict the behavior of individuals. Predicting the behavior of individuals is a necessary part of everyday experience, and the better understanding we have of the principles that affect behavior, the better our chances are of making correct predictions. When we write a letter to a hotel, requesting a reservation we predict that our letter will be answered. Knowing something about the attitudes and values of hotel managers, we enhance the validity of that prediction by typing a neat letter and phrasing it in a businesslike tone. If we are mak-

ing reservations at small provincial French hotels, we draw on our intercultural fund of information and decide to write our letters in French, because we can predict that letters in English might be ignored. To return to our ethnocentrism study, if we are talking to a freshman and a senior in the university in question, we might expect the senior to be more "open" and less biased in matters relating to racial minorities. There is a good chance that our predictions are valid, but we should nevertheless be alert to the possibility that either or both of the two students we are addressing may not be responsive to the main trend in their classes.

Another way of stating this is to say that the individual about whom we are supplied with data by the research of social psychologists is not a real person. Instead, he is a fictitious "everyman"—the "person" who represents the aggregate of individuals described in the research in question. The "person" may also be "everyman" in a much broader sense, when social psychologists construct theories relating to general behavioral trends.

A similar generalization holds true with respect to "the self." The "self as a psychological construct" certainly refers to the individual, but it refers again to "everyman." What we know about "everyman" is nevertheless useful in developing self-understanding. Each of us is like *all* others, like *some* others, and like *no* others (Kluckhohn, Murray, & Schneider, 1953). It is to the extent that a given individual resembles *all others* and *some others* that theory and research in social psychology can aid in understanding his behavior.

### *Interpersonal behavior*

It is within the interaction between ourselves and other individuals that the most significant events of our lives are likely to occur. These

are the events that bring us joy or sorrow, that shape our behavior and help make us the persons we are today, and that give to life most of whatever meaning it has for us. As we shall show, social aggregates (societies, cultures, nations, organizations) also have a significant effect on our lives, but this influence is usually expressed in the form of an interpersonal event. The beliefs and values that determine individual behavior are to a large degree derived from the culture, but they must all be learned. The process of learning them from agents of the culture (parents, friends, authority figures) takes place in every instance in the form of interpersonal events. Even the impersonal tone of a form letter from the draft board does not keep it from being an interpersonal event—an interpersonal transaction, to be exact. It is, after all, from a real person who represents an aggregate of real people, and it is addressed to another real person.

Social influence is a two-way process. Just as groups and other social aggregates influence individuals through interpersonal transactions, the influence that individuals exert on groups also takes place interpersonally. Groups are, after all, composed of individuals, and changes in the belief systems of individuals are likely to reflect themselves in changes in group behavior.

Social psychologists are interested in studying all aspects of interpersonal events: antecedents and results, as well as the attitudes and other motivational states of the actors in the event; and the results may also be reflected in attitudes and feelings that lead to further interpersonal actions. Interpersonal events may also be studied in terms of the kinds of action taken: acceptance, rejection, aggression, love, avoidance, or whatever. Interpersonal events may also be viewed in terms of categories of behavior, for example, as communication processes, as indications of social learning, or from the standpoint of cooperation or competition.

**Group behavior**

The smallest type of social aggregate is a dyad or two-person group. At this level of analysis, behavior is rather obviously at the interpersonal level. The dyad may nevertheless be studied in terms of its rather special characteristics as a group. Two people acting together are likely to behave in different ways than the same two people separately. If we study their behavior in terms of each individual's relationship to the other, we are likely to consider it from the standpoint of interpersonal behavior; but, if we are concerned with the particular characteristics of dyads, we have moved to another level of social interaction and are considering their actions as a form of group behavior.

People seem to have an overriding need to associate with others, and this need can be met most efficiently within the context of groups. We can identify certain patterns of behavior that function to enable groups to maintain themselves and to satisfy the needs of their members. Among these patterns are social norms that govern the behavior of group members; conformity to such norms is the price that members must pay in order to enjoy the advantages of associating with others in groups. Social psychologists study norms in terms of how they develop, how they influence the behavior of individual members, and how they affect interpersonal behavior.

There are many different levels of group interaction, each of which sets special conditions for behavior. The degree of personal involvement felt by individual members also affects behavior and may vary with the size of the group, as well as with its character. Active participation is generally easier in smaller groups than in larger ones; hence, there is often a tendency for people to become involved in groups in which they can interact on a face-to-face basis. This does not always hold true,

because contrary patterns may be learned in some cultures. In more traditional cultures, people are likely to feel the highest degree of commitment to their family, which is a face-to-face or primary group. This commitment may be higher than their commitment to their nation, as is indicated by the fact that members of their family have more influence on their behavior than do officials of their government. In more industrialized cultures the individual's commitment is likely to be more diffuse; employers, various levels of government, and voluntary organizations tend to absorb more of the commitment than individuals, in more primitive cultures, feel toward their families, and in certain instances the demands of the larger group may be given a higher degree of priority than family demands. A personnel officer in a Mediterranean or Latin American bank would feel duty-bound to give his brother a job, even though the latter rated fifth or sixth in a list of applicants, whereas a person occupying a similar position in Northern Europe or in North America would be more inclined to hire the best man.

***History of Social Psychology******Early beginnings***

It is difficult to set any beginning point for social psychology. It can perhaps be said to have begun when man first developed symbolic terms to deal with his relations with others, which undoubtedly occurred in prehistoric times. The word "social" itself comes from the Latin *socialis*, which has roots that go back as far as linguistic history can take us—to Sanskrit, in which the word *sacati* means "he follows or accompanies." *Sacati* is, in turn, related to words in Greek and the Romance languages that have to do with association, following, sharing, and similar concepts.

The appearance of Western civilization, as indicated by the construction of cities, is said to have taken place in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The stability and success of these early settlements was undoubtedly assured by the fact that their people had developed a written language enabling them to record social norms in the form of laws and regulations. These laws were codified about 2000 B.C. and issued by the reigning king, Hammurabi, in what is probably the first social document. The Code of Hammurabi is particularly notable in that it promulgated a social order based on the rights of the individual, as protected by the authority of the state. It doubtless influenced the formulation of laws included in the first five books of the Bible, which appeared about the first millenium before the present era. The relationship between the individual and society also interested the Greeks, especially the Athenians. The chief figures here are Solon, whose code of laws was a marked step in the direction of democracy, and Plato and Aristotle, who each wrote on political matters.

Concern about man's relation to man appears in the writings of many philosophers and theologians during the centuries that followed. The eloquent statement of John Donne (1572-1631) about man's social identity ("No man is an Iland, . . .") is only one example. The British philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries speculated about the motives of social behavior: Thomas Hobbes about power, Adam Smith about self-interest, and Jeremy Bentham about pleasure.

### *The appearance of sociology*

All this, however, was preliminary to the appearance of social psychology as a field. Auguste Comte, the French mathematician and philosopher, writing about the middle of the nineteenth century, stated that he was going

to write a treatise on social psychology (*Le système de morale positive*), but he died before he could carry out this intention. He is also credited with being the founder of sociology; his *Système de politique positive* expounds the view that man is both the cause and the consequence of society. Later in the century, other scholars began to subject social behavior to a scientific scrutiny. Charles Darwin included social forms of behavior in his *Descent of man* (1871), and in 1893, Herbert Spencer published his *Study of sociology*. The next few decades saw a great deal of activity on the part of sociologists. Gustave Le Bon published his classic book on crowds and their behavior in 1895. Both he and Emile Durkheim maintained that human behavior is dominated by a "group mind." Charles Horton Cooley and George Herbert Mead, both American sociologists, disputed this idea and developed theories with respect to the development of "the self," which, in turn, contributed to the self theories that personality psychologists proposed during the 1940's and 1950's.

### *Contributions of psychologists*

We have given particular emphasis to the work of sociologists, inasmuch as psychologists played only a minor part in the early development of social psychology. The first psychologists to show an interest in social behavior were Heymann Steinthal and Moritz Lazarus, who were active in developing "folk psychology" in Germany during the 1860's. They founded a journal that reported folklore, but their work was directed toward mysticism and philosophy, as they speculated about the thought processes of primitive people. Wilhelm Wundt, the father of experimental psychology, also wrote extensively on folk psychology and the evolution of culture.

William McDougall, a British psychologist, published his *Introduction to social psychology* in



1908, the same year that an American sociologist, Edward A. Ross, also published a *Social psychology*. McDougall's social psychology was focused on the individual, in contrast to the development of social psychological thought up to that point, but it proposed that social behavior could be explained largely in terms of instincts. Although McDougall's approach was welcomed at first, within a couple of decades it had been largely discarded by social psychologists. The publication of Floyd H. Allport's *Social psychology* in 1924 marked the beginning of what might be called the "modern era" in social psychology. Allport accepted the individual approach to social behavior proposed by McDougall and rejected the "group mind" idea that had been a recurring theme in the writings of European sociologists and psychologists, but he refused to accept the instinctual theories of McDougall, preferring to view social behavior as the result of what he called "prepotent reflexes," which are modified through conditioning. This contribution not only made his work consistent with the behavioristic psychology of the day, but also stimulated a line of research found today in studies of social learning. The publication of Allport's book also marked a turning point in social psychology, because it was the first social treatise to be based on results of experimentation rather than on observation, theorizing, and speculation. It thus initiated a trend that has become a major approach in social psychology today.

Scientific experimentation in social psychology first began in 1898, when Norman Triplett found that children winding up reels of string to which flags had been attached worked faster when they were with others than when they were alone. This "group effect" on individual behavior was also observed by Walther Moede, a German psychologist, who noted that hand-grip strength and pain endurance were greater when subjects were with

others than when they were alone. However, it was Allport's report of experiments measuring the influence of the group on individual behavior that attracted the interest of experimentally minded psychologists and led to what we recognize today as experimental social psychology. Two classic studies during the 1930's are mileposts in this development trend. One is the study of the development of social norms conducted by Muzafer Sherif (1935), and the other is the study of social climates by Kurt Lewin and his associates (1939).

### *Recent events*

Social psychology has gone through a number of major changes in the last thirty or forty years. The most noticeable trend has been the growing importance of the experimental approach since its beginnings in the 1920's. Another trend has been the development of personality psychology, an area of interest shared by both clinical and social psychologists. The growing interest in both personality and social psychology led Morton Prince in 1921 to change the title of his *Journal of abnormal psychology* to the *Journal of abnormal psychology and social psychology*, later shortened to the *Journal of abnormal and social psychology*. Under the latter title, the journal played a leading role in the field of social psychology until 1965, when it once again became the *Journal of abnormal psychology* and the American Psychological Association started the *Journal of personality and social psychology* to serve as the major vehicle for research in these overlapping fields. The *Journal of social psychology* was founded by Carl Murchison and John Dewey in 1929 to serve as an additional resource for this growing area of research interest. The years since World War II have seen an increase in the number of journals devoted to various aspects of social psychology. *Human relations*, the *Journal of experimental social psychology*, and the *Journal of conflict resolution* are three examples.

Social psychology has also branched out into applied fields. In 1935 George Gallup began sampling public opinion by polling stratified samples of the public. The same year saw the founding of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, now a division of the American Psychological Association. There has also been an increasing amount of "cross-fertilization" between social psychology and industrial psychology. The classic study of production and morale at the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric Company in the late 1920's and early 1930's was essentially a field study of social behavior, and much of the work and the research conducted by industrial psychologists today can be called "applied social psychology." Educational psychology has also moved from an earlier preoccupation with problems of measurement, coupled with attempts to apply rather narrowly defined principles of learning as developed in psychological laboratories, to a concept of the classroom and the school as social situations. Developmental, clinical, and counseling psychologists are also making more extensive use of data derived from research in social psychology.

Although the majority of studies in social psychology today are carried out by psychologists, sociologists continue to play an active role in the field. Their major contributions have been in the form of theory building. We have mentioned the self theories of Mead and Cooley. More recently there have been the contributions of Robert K. Merton (1957) to role theory, as well as the concepts of position, status, and role that were particularly emphasized in the work of Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils (1951). Sociologists have also done some important field research with results of considerable psychological importance. Perhaps the most significant of these are the studies of social class conducted by Lloyd Warner and his associates (1941, 1949) in the 1930's and 1940's.

Studies of social status showed that people in different social classes have different beliefs, attitudes, values, and patterns of behavior and that each social class is, in effect, a kind of sub-culture within the larger national culture. The importance of culture as a social variable was largely revealed by cultural anthropologists, who were studying primitive peoples long before sociology or social psychology became academic disciplines. Most of the early research was descriptive, but after World War I anthropologists began to write about topics of psychological interest. Bronislaw Malinowski (1929) observed behavioral trends among tribes in the Western Pacific that raised questions about the general applicability of Freud's theories of personality development. Ruth Benedict (1934) and Margaret Mead (1928, 1930) drew conclusions from their studies of primitive societies that challenged assumptions about human behavior based on American and European norms. A number of cultural anthropologists, including Margaret Mead (1949), have also turned their attention to psychological aspects of the cultures of technically advanced nations. Ralph Linton (1945) has synthesized much of the work of cultural anthropologists and psychologists in his work on the cultural aspects of personality.

### *The problem of relevance*

Like other scientists today, social psychologists have been subjected to a great deal of pressure to be "socially relevant"—that is, to get peace candidates elected, to reduce international tensions, to eliminate poverty and race prejudice, to solve "urban spread" and other ecological problems, to make public education a more meaningful experience, and to help a harassed society cope with delinquency and drug use. The pressure to be relevant has been partly internal, because the majority of social psychologists are politically liberal, with active

social consciences, and partly external, in the form of exhortation from other social scientists. There are other factors, of course. Investigations in social psychology are concerned with interpersonal relations, attitudes and values, intergroup friction, social influence—in other words, behavioral dimensions that are basic to all social difficulties. It is, for example, difficult to be involved in studying problems related to aggression and prejudice without becoming concerned about the implications of one's findings for society. As a result of these interests and involvements, a great many social psychologists have tried to find ways in which their activities as behavioral scientists could be related to some kind of activity outside the context of the laboratory and the classroom. The Society for the Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) and the *Journal of conflict resolution* are two expressions of this attempt to find relevance; another is the active participation of social psychologists in such organizations as Americans for Democratic Action, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the American Federation of Scientists.

There have been some very positive gains as a result of social psychologists' involvement in social problem solving. For one thing, they have learned a great deal. Raymond A. Bauer (1971) describes this learning as follows:

Twenty years ago it was a commonplace for psychologists to talk about all conflict as though it could be reduced to a failure of communication or to the displacement of personal aggressive tendencies. Today we have a cadre of psychologists, who, by and large, have done their homework and understand that there are such things as legitimate conflicts of interest in organizations, that diplomacy has a role in international affairs, that wars are not always a result of hostility but sometimes of ineptitude, and so on [p. 112].

In short, involvement in relevant problems

has given psychologists a greater degree of awareness as to the dimensions of problems in the "real world" outside the classroom and the laboratory.

Aside from the "learning experience," however, the attempts of social psychologists to become involved in the solution of social problems have often been disappointing. Part of this disappointment has come from the awareness that there are a great many facets of social problems that have not been adequately researched, and they find themselves with few "hard data" to serve as a basis for action. The roles social psychologists play as scientists also lead them to be tentative about their findings and theories and to remember that the field of science is littered with the discarded hulks of obsolete "truths." Another disappointment comes when social psychologists learn that their suggestions and interpretations are often ignored or neglected both by social planners and by the public at large. As Karl E. Weick (1969) has noted, the findings of social psychologists threaten people because, if they were implemented, vested interests would be challenged. Furthermore, as we have noted, conclusions based on psychological research sometimes run counter to common sense and the conventional wisdom.

In spite of these obstacles and problems, Weick sees social psychologists as individuals who have something unusual to offer, especially in times of social change. Such periods are both stressful and painful, and people tend to cling to slogans and catchwords that are apparently profound. Weick notes that people treat such slogans as answers, but seldom ask themselves, "Just what question does that slogan answer?" If we are to understand the implications of the events around us and our relationship to them, what we need are not answers, but questions, according to Weick, and this is where social psychologists can make their best contribution.

George A. Miller (1969), in his presidential address to the American Psychological Association, was speaking of all psychologists when he made the following statement, but it appears particularly relevant to the activities of social psychologists:

Our responsibility is less to assume the role of experts and try to apply psychology ourselves than to give it away to the people who really need it—and that includes everyone. The practice of valid psychology by nonpsychologists will inevitably change people's conception of themselves and what they can do. When we have accomplished that, we will really have caused a psychological revolution [p. 1071]

### *The Methods of Social Psychology*

Kenneth Boulding (1967), in an examination of the roles of the various behavioral sciences, has pointed to an important difference between social psychology and the other sciences concerned with social behavior: sociology, economics, political science, and anthropology. The social psychologist, he says, specializes in the study of small social systems, whereas other social scientists are concerned with the study of large ones. The focus of both sociology and social psychology is less sharply defined than those of the other social sciences, but the sociologist is more likely to be interested in:

... those aspects, institutions, and organizations which are concerned primarily with what I call the integrative system, that aspect of society which deals with status, identity, legitimation, loyalty, love, and their opposites, in which society is organized through the common recognition of status and community. In dividing up the institutions among the disciplines, sociology tends to get at things like the family, the church,

philanthropic and welfare organizations, informal groups, and so on, which are primarily institutions of the integrative system [p. 883].

Boulding also thinks of psychology as being more basic than the other social sciences—something like the relationship between physics and chemistry. The person, which is the focus of psychology, is in a sense the “atom” of the social system.

Along this line, a perusal of articles in the journals published by the various behavioral sciences will show that psychologists make a great deal more use of the experiment than do other social scientists, although the latter use some experimental methods as well. This is partly because the psychologist is closer to the laboratory tradition, but also because focusing on small systems makes experimentation more feasible. It is infinitely easier for a psychologist to plan and carry out an experiment involving, say, the effect of competition on the problem-solving behavior of small groups than it is for a sociologist to experiment with the effect of competition on various kinds of organizations. This difference does not make social psychologists any more “scientific” than sociologists and the other social scientists, but is, instead, a function of the kind of material psychologists and the other scientists are dealing with.

### *Experimental methods*

In conducting experiments, social psychologists follow the procedures that are standard practice in all experimental sciences. The researcher observes what he thinks may be certain regular (or “lawful”) consistencies in a field of behavior that interests him, and formulates a hypothesis that might serve to explain or to describe his observations. He then sets up an experiment

under carefully-controlled conditions to test his hypothesis. Controls can include such measures as selecting experimental and comparison (control) groups of subjects that are matched (made comparable) on any variable that might possibly affect the results. If the experiment deals with a hypothesized improvement in problem solving which might result from an experimental treatment, the experimenter would presumably make sure that the experimental and control groups were matched in intelligence, since the latter is a variable which has been shown to be related to success in problem-solving. He also sees to it that the two groups use similar materials, that they work in the same environment, and that they work under the direction of the same personnel. The only difference in the conditions experienced by the two groups will be the difference between the control treatment (which usually approximates "normal" conditions) and the experimental treatment. The differences in the "before" and "after" performance of the two groups are then analyzed and statistically compared.

In actuality, a number of variations on this standard procedure may occur without the experimenter feeling that he has violated any major canons of research practice. For example, he may begin his research by wondering: "What will happen if I try . . . ?" However, even this is not as hypothesis-free as it seems, because the researcher usually has a vague or unformulated hunch as to what might happen, and the choice of an experimental approach in such a situation is not likely to be a random one. This kind of "fooling around" with research techniques is probably much more common than the carefully reasoned and detailed planning of which research supposedly consists. In such instances, however, it is common practice to do a "dry run" with a method that seems to have possibilities, and, if positive or otherwise interesting results are obtained, the researcher takes steps to carry out a more

meticulously planned and conducted study of the type that usually gets reported.

The type of experiment we have described is in the tradition of S-R research—S-R standing for Stimulus-Response. In such research, the stimulus condition becomes the *independent variable* that is manipulated by the experimenter, and the response becomes the *dependent variable*. Variations in the response, in other words, *depend on*, or are caused by, the investigator's manipulation of the independent variable. In an experiment on the use of propaganda, for example, variations in the presentation of propaganda are the independent variable, and the extent to which subjects accept the propagandized views would be the dependent variable. The changes in the subjects' beliefs or attitudes would thereby be considered to have been *caused* by differences in the propaganda presentation.

A great deal of social behavior, however, is not easily researched by experimental, S-R methods. An investigator may, for example, be interested in testing the hypothesis that successful leaders are not as authoritarian as unsuccessful leaders. The variables are already present in the subjects' behavioral repertoire, and an experiment of the S-R type is not feasible. The investigator, therefore, turns to an approach that is variously labeled as *correlational*, *differential*, or *R-R* research—*correlational*, because two variables, leadership and authoritarianism, are being correlated; *differential*, because the researcher is looking for differences in authoritarianism as related to different styles of leadership; and *R-R*, because both leadership and authoritarianism can be considered as responses of the subject.

R-R research has come under criticism on the part of some experimentally-oriented psychologists, who claim that the experimental manipulation of the independent variable is the only scientifically-defensible definition of a causal relationship. This position has, in turn,

been criticized by other researchers as being too narrow and rigid. Gene V. Glass and Rory Remer (1970), for instance, point out that more causal relationships have been discovered without tightly-controlled S-R experiments than with them, and that R-R research is strong where experiments are weak. Kenneth E. Cofield (1970), too, notes that R-R research is a useful adjunct to S-R experiments in that it can be used to provide a greater understanding of the details that lie behind individual variations. Even a casual review of published social psychological research will show, furthermore, that both types of research have been productive of insights into the significant factors that underlie social behavior.

### *Example of an experiment: Effects of severity of initiation*

As a sample of S-R research, let us review an experiment undertaken to test a hypothesis that developed partly out of the common observation that people tend to value goals in terms of the difficulty they have experienced in attaining them. The experimenting psychologists, Elliot Aronson and Judson Mills (1959), were interested in studying the effect of initiations on group members' perception of the group they joined. Using the cognitive dissonance theory developed by Leon Festinger (1957), which we discuss at length in Chapter 7, they predicted that people who joined groups with a more severe initiation would show a greater liking for the group than would people who joined groups with a less severe form of initiation. They predicted, furthermore, that if the severely-initiated subjects came to prefer their group, it would be because they had ignored or minimized certain of its unpleasant features and had exaggerated its more positive ones.

The experiment was conducted with sixty-three college women, who had volunteered to participate in group discussions on the

psychology of sex. The subjects were directed to report, one at a time, to the experimental room, where each girl was met by the experimenter. He said that he was interested in investigating the "dynamics of the group discussion process" and explained that sex had been chosen as the topic for the groups in view of its potential interest. If the subject were one of those who had been chosen (unbeknownst to her, of course) for the severe initiation treatment, she was told that some of the discussants had difficulty in discussing sexual matters and that it had been found necessary to screen applicants before letting them join groups. The screening device was described as an "embarrassment test," which consisted of the subject reading sexually-oriented material aloud in the presence of the experimenter. The subject was also told that the experimenter would be judging her degree of embarrassment, and would be basing his decision as to whether she would be permitted to join the group on the amount of blushing and hesitation that she displayed. The subject was then asked to read aloud twelve obscene words from 3 x 5 cards and two passages from contemporary novels vividly describing sexual activity. One-third of the subjects underwent the "severe initiation" treatment, and another third underwent a "mild initiation" treatment, in which they read five words that were related to sex but not obscene. Subjects assigned to the control treatment were not asked to read anything.

Subjects were then told that the group discussion was to take place among four participants seated in booths and communicating over microphones about a book, *Sexual behavior in animals*. The subject was then asked if she had read the book; invariably she had not. The experimenter then suggested that, inasmuch as she had not read the book, perhaps she should merely listen during this session and not try to enter into the discussion in any way. He then went through the motions of introducing the

subject by microphone to the other members of the group, who were presumably waiting in their cubicles, and then handed the earphones to the subject. What the subject heard was actually a prerecorded discussion by three undergraduate women students. It was a discussion that was deliberately designed to be as dull and boring as possible. The students spoke haltingly and in technical terms of secondary sex behavior in the lower animals, "accidentally" contradicting themselves and one another, mumbling non sequiturs, starting sentences they never finished, hemming and hawing, and generally conducting one of the most uninteresting and worthless discussions imaginable.

When the discussion was concluded, the experimenter then asked each subject to rate the discussion she had heard on a number of scales—dull-interesting, intelligent-unintelligent, and so forth. Nine of the scales dealt with the subject's reaction to the discussion; the other scales elicited her reaction to the participants. When this task had been completed, the experimenter explained the nature of the experiment to the subjects, none of whom expressed any annoyance or resentment at having been misled. In fact, the majority was very much interested, and several returned at the end of the school term to learn the results of the experiment.

As predicted, the results showed that subjects who had experienced the severe initiation valued both the discussion and the discussants higher than did subjects in the other two treatments, and those who experienced the mild initiation rated it slightly higher (but not significantly so) than had the control group.

Aronson and Mills' experiment demonstrates the value of exercising adequate controls. Their subjects were all randomly drawn from the same pool of available subjects: women attending the same university who were interested in participating in discussions dealing

with the psychology of sex. Each of the three groups of subjects received the same treatment, except for the two types of initiation procedures. Analysis of the results showed that statistically significant results were obtained between the major independent variable (the severity of initiation) and the two dependent variables: liking for the discussion and the discussants.

If an experiment has been properly conducted, it should be possible for another researcher to replicate it and obtain the same results. Indeed, its replicability can be considered as a test of the validity of the findings. Aronson and Mills' approach has been used in a somewhat different study, in which confirmation of their results was obtained (Schopler & Bateson, 1962).

### *Example of an Unobtrusive R-R study*

Nonexperimental methods take many forms. One type of R-R research consists of the administration of questionnaires, the results of which are correlated with each other or with other variables. The questionnaire is a useful, but probably overused, instrument. In actuality, it is a paper-and-pencil interview that can be filled out by hundreds of subjects and thus save a great deal of research time and money. One problem is that of instrument design, but another major problem, often overlooked by researchers, is that of getting subjects to cooperate and take the task seriously. Otherwise they will respond randomly or even refuse altogether.

Psychologists have been able to develop a number of techniques that sample personality and social behavior variables unobtrusively and thus avoid many of the problems posed by questionnaire measures. One could observe the relationship between status and social behavior, for example, by noting how often university

*R. 87*

instructors leave elevators ahead of students. Further comparison could be made between elevators in engineering, humanities, social science, and education departments in order to determine differences in the way professors and students in these disciplines react to status. Richard L. Zweigenhaft (1970) carried out an unobtrusive study of status somewhat along these lines by comparing the signature size of university instructors and students on library sign-out cards. The technique used was that of locating ten student signatures that matched a faculty signature with respect to number of letters and general configuration. The signature of a faculty member named H. Smith was compared with, say, the signatures of students signing themselves as A. Heath, F. Wirth, K. Gaeth, and the like. The accumulated data consisted of signatures for nine faculty and 90 student signatures.

The results, which are displayed in Figure 1-1, showed that the faculty signatures tended to be considerably larger than student signatures. In another phase of his study, Zweigenhaft asked students, blue-collar work-

ers, and professors to sign their names on cards. The blue-collar workers were approximately the same age as the professors. Results showed that professors' signatures covered a mean area of 65 cm<sup>2</sup> (square centimeters); blue-collar workers' signatures, 44 cm<sup>2</sup>; and students' signatures, 32.5 cm<sup>2</sup>. In still another phase of his research, Zweigenhaft secured library sign-out signatures for a professor from the time he was an undergraduate through his graduate years until he was appointed to the faculty. His signature initially covered less than 20 cm<sup>2</sup>; as a faculty member it averaged between 60 and 70 cm<sup>2</sup>. In short, the findings show a correlation between status and signature size and suggest that as one's status increases, a very personal form of self-expressive behavior—one's signature—changes along the lines that one would expect.

Unobtrusive studies like Zweigenhaft's signature-size investigations have the advantage of being less artificial than either laboratory experiments or R-R research using questionnaires. Although controls are more difficult in such studies, they are more directly related to "real-life" situations. In other forms of nonexperimental research—field studies, for example—investigators may actually remain for long periods of time within the physical context of the group being studied, while they observe and take notes as unobtrusively as possible. The study of social class in Newburyport, Massachusetts, by Lloyd Warner and P.S. Lunt (1941) was of that nature. Opinion polls are another form of field study. These polls are usually structured interviews (interviews that follow a definite schedule of questions), but may also consist of unstructured or "open-ended" questions, with the interviewer saying only enough to get the respondent to say what is on his mind. The latter type of interview is harder to analyze, but it does have the advantage of not giving respondents cues as to what the

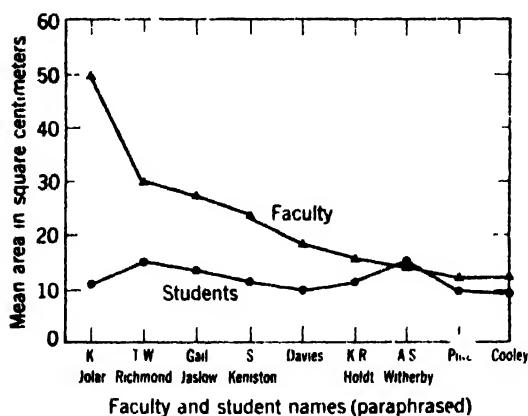


Figure 1-1. Differences in mean area covered by faculty and student signatures with similar letter configurations on library sign-out cards. (Zweigenhaft, 1970).



interviewer is seeking and thus leaves them free to express concerns and interests that are really theirs and not the interviewer's.

### *Example of nonexperimental research in the field*

One example of a survey is Warren Breed's (1966) study of suicide in New Orleans. Breed, a sociologist at Tulane University, was interested in the influence of migration, sex, and race on suicide rates. Inasmuch as suicide is presumably related to the amount of social and psychological stress people sustain, he hypothesized that migrants would be characterized by a higher suicide rate than would established residents of the city. He was also interested in determining whether there were any other discernible patterns in the causes of suicide.

Breed's method was that of conducting interviews with the relatives, friends, neighbors, employers, co-workers, and physicians of all suicide victims between the ages of 18 and 60 who died in New Orleans over a several-year span in the 1950's and 1960's. When he classified the female victims in terms of the amount of time they had been living in New Orleans, he found that those suicides who had been living there less than ten years tended to be young, lower class, with little education, and without family in the nearby area. All of them had borne children. Their chief problems appeared to revolve around their inability to find and hold men either in marriage or in a common-law relationship. The background of women suicides who had been living in New Orleans longer than ten years was quite different. These women were older and were more likely to be married, middle class, and childless. They were also more inclined to have relatives in the area. Their suicides were due to a variety of causes, except that about 60% of them had poor relationships with their spouses. The

background of the women native to New Orleans was similar to that of nonnatives who had lived there ten years or more, and family problems were the chief cause of their suicide.

The pattern was both similar and different for male victims. They were less likely to have come to the city at an early age, but many of them had no relatives in the area. Their overall family situation was poor, as it was for the female suicides. The chief difference between men and women, however, lay in the fact that more of the men were occupational failures. They had suffered a decline in occupational status, and, when compared to a control group of males who had not committed suicide, they were more likely to be unemployed.

The Negro suicide rate in New Orleans was quite low, although the suicide for middle-class Negroes was higher than that for lower-class Negroes. Breed offers several explanations for the differences between Negroes and whites. One possibility is that social and, particularly, familial ties are stronger among Negroes and that members of the Negro community are more likely to show personal concern for one another. This interpretation receives some support in statistics on Negro suicide rates in northern cities, which are considerably higher than those in New Orleans and other southern cities. Another interpretation is that occupational failure is less of a blow to the Negro male ego in southern cities, where he is not expected to compete with whites and consequently is less likely to develop "status anxiety." The higher suicide rates for northern Negroes may be a partial result of exposure to different standards for job performance and success, coupled with adjustment problems resulting from migration.

Inasmuch as a disproportionate number of relatively-recent arrivals of both sexes had committed suicide, Breed's hypothesis that immigrants would be more prone to suicide was supported.

Breed's study differs from the experiment by Aronson and Mills in that it is descriptive, makes use of interviews, presents case studies, and produces conclusions that are more general and, at the same time, more tentative and speculative. Breed's research differs from the signature-size study in that his methods were more direct (interviewing) and secured many more data. His study also differs from the other two investigations in that it was on a much larger scale and dealt more or less directly with a number of interrelated major social problems: the deterioration of the family, race relations, loss of status, migration, and poverty. Each of these three studies, however, tells us something about human social behavior, and all three types are needed. Field studies like Breed's survey can explore a wider variety of variables than can S-R and R-R research, and can also suggest a greater range of alternative interpretations for findings, whereas studies of the S-R and R-R type are needed for their accuracy and precision in focusing on a specific bit of behavior.

### *Experimentation in the field*

Sometimes the two approaches can be combined, as they were in the series of studies of conflict and cooperation in small groups undertaken by Muzafer Sherif and his associates (1953, 1961, 1963). Sherif integrated both field and laboratory psychology in a single research design by establishing controls over a social situation, and by manipulating conditions to produce conditions found in real life. His first step was a survey of research findings dealing with friendship, hostility, cooperation, and competition. He then selected groups of boys who were relatively homogeneous according to a number of significant variables, such as age and social class. A summer camp was chosen as ideal for the site of the experiment because its isolation enabled the experimenters to control variables that might intervene. When the

subjects assembled at the experimental area, the experimenters presented them with a series of tasks that would enable groups to organize and to develop structure, status systems, and norms. When the structure of the groups had satisfied certain predetermined criteria, the groups were then involved in a number of interactions designed to arouse intergroup hostility, whereupon they were faced with situations that required collaboration in dealing with joint problems, with a resulting diminution of hostility.

Throughout the study, elaborate precautions were taken to keep the boys from knowing that they were being observed and rated. Every effort was made to make the assessment techniques a natural part of the camp situation by presenting them in the form of appropriate activities. The experimenters' control over the arrangements gave them ample opportunity to manipulate and to maneuver situations and subjects in ways that made it possible to test hypotheses about group formation and intergroup relations. Finally, the findings were subjected to a system of crosschecking and cross-validation, using a number of different measures and independent ratings. The success that Sherif had with this series of studies shows that laboratory and field methods can be used to supplement one another.

Psychologists are showing a high degree of ingenuity when it comes to planning and carrying out experiments in natural situations. In this book we shall present a number of studies in which bystanders unwittingly become subjects without their being aware of it. A black man falls down in a subway train, apparently intoxicated. Will other passengers come to his rescue? (Piliavin, Rodin, & Piliavin, 1969). A young white woman comes out of a supermarket. Her bag of groceries bursts, and her purchases tumble to the ground. Will passersby help her? Does it make a difference if the passersby are male or female, black or white?

(Wispé & Freshley, 1971). Can two antiwar picketers discourage the purchase of toy guns during the Christmas rush? (Lupfer, Kay & Burnette, 1969). These are the kinds of naturalistic situations that are increasingly used by social psychologists to test their hypotheses. The ones we have just mentioned will be discussed under the heading of social influence in Chapter 6.

### *The Rationale of This Book*

We begin in Chapter 2 with the problem basic to all forms of social interaction: why people seek to associate with one another. In this chapter we also introduce some basic concepts that are referred to from time to time throughout the book: the inverted-U hypothesis, dealing with the relationship between social stimulation, stress, and performance; the search for meaning in the social context; and the use of social interaction as a basis for personal identity and definition. Chapter 3 carries on with the theme of association, but with particular reference to the process of interpersonal attraction. Chapter 4 deals with the result of interacting with others: social learning. Chapter 5 is concerned with the motivational aspect of what is learned. Chapter 6 takes note of the fact that the privilege of associating with others has its price: susceptibility to influence. Chapter 7 focuses on another motivational aspect in attitude formation, decision making, and interpersonal attractiveness: the tendency to prefer consonance and to avoid dissonance.

These six chapters focus principally on the individual as he develops and exists in a social context. The next group of chapters is likewise concerned with the relationship between the individual and his social environment, but the material here is more concerned with the environment as a source of forces which impinge on the individual and shape his behavior. It is recognized, of course, that the individual plays

an active part in the process by helping to determine both the kinds of forces and the kinds of groups that serve as his social environment. Chapter 8 deals with status as it is derived from the individual's position in social structures, whereas Chapter 9 is concerned with the roles that are related both to status and position. Chapter 10 discusses personality, which is determined to a large degree by the roles played by the individual. Personality and roles, as Chapter 11 attempts to show, are also strongly influenced by the individual's culture, which sets the pattern for the social matrix in which the individual is embedded. The ways in which groups and individuals perceive each other are treated in Chapter 12.

Chapters 13 to 17 are concerned with group processes and structure. Chapter 13 deals with communication, the basis of all social interaction. Chapter 14 discusses some of the general aspects of group behavior; Chapter 15 is concerned with the ways in which groups deal with problems. Chapter 16 moves into a discussion of leaders and their influence on the behavior of others. This theme is continued in Chapter 17, where the chief topic is organizational behavior.

The final chapter, Chapter 18, deals with a major social problem: the management and control of aggression.

### *Summary*

The most pressing problems faced by man today are not problems relating to biological survival, but social problems. The particular branch of psychology concerned with the relationship between social interaction and the behavior of individuals is social psychology. The work of social psychologists may aid our understanding of the factors involved in social problems and thus our ability to cope with them. Most people, however, prefer to deal

with problems in terms of what is ordinarily termed "common sense," and what Galbraith calls "the conventional wisdom." Although common sense implies the use of mature experience and objectivity, it is also invoked as a way of justifying a wide range of decisions and policies, including some that are quite irrational. Both conventional wisdom and common sense include beliefs which may have been valid in the past, but which have outlived their usefulness.

Social psychologists make use of scientific techniques and accept the disciplines of the scientific method in gathering and interpreting data. Hence, their conclusions and predictions regarding behavior often run contrary to those derived from common sense or the conventional wisdom. An example cited of the problems that result when social factors are ignored is the experience of radio astronomers who located an observatory in a remote area of West Virginia. Astronomers and their families reacted unfavorably to being isolated from their usual contacts, and a morale problem developed. Inasmuch as people become integrated with their social environment, bringing about drastic changes in that environment creates many types of problems.

All psychology is to some extent concerned with the study of individual behavior, and social psychology deals with the areas of behavior that involve interaction and relationships between the individual and others. The focus is not on any specific individual, however, but on individuals-in-general. General principles that apply to behavior and may be used as bases for predicting behavior are derived from the study of behavior samples or collections of subjects. The principles so derived have a statistically better chance of being valid when applied to numbers of individuals who are similar to those on whom the study was based than they would be if applied to the behavior of a single individual. Each of us is like all others, like

some others, and like no others. It is to the extent that we are like some others and all others that research in social psychology can aid in understanding and predicting our behavior. The behavior studied by social psychologists may take place on interpersonal levels where the events of our lives that have the most immediate significance are likely to occur, or on the level of the larger group, where forces are generated that have a significant, long-range effect on our lives.

Social psychology may be said to have begun with the first codes of laws regulating social behavior. British philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries speculated about the motives of social behavior, but it was not until the nineteenth century that scholars directed serious study to sociology and cultural anthropology, precursors of modern social psychology. The first formal works in social psychology appeared early in this century and were largely of a speculative and theoretical nature. Scientific experimentation in social psychology began in 1898, but the first book in the field was not published until 1921. Since that date social psychology has undergone a rapid expansion and now has become a source area for a number of fields in the behavioral sciences, including public opinion sampling, educational psychology, industrial psychology, and personality. Today, many social psychologists are concerned about the social relevance of their work, and are attempting to find some way to communicate their findings and insights to the general public and to decision makers, in the hope that matters of policy may be influenced. Although such attempts have not generally been very successful, they have introduced social psychologists to real-life problems outside the laboratory and classroom, and this encounter has led to a greater sophistication and a broader awareness of the complexities of such problems. In spite of disappointments, there is no indication that social

psychologists should stop trying to communicate with nonpsychologists about social problems. During times of great change there is an even greater need for the kind of new insights and interpretations of problems that social psychologists are able to give.

Sociology differs from social psychology in that the former is concerned with large-scale and the latter with small-scale social systems. Social psychologists are more likely to use experiments of the stimulus-response (S-R) type in their research than are sociologists, although they use correlational or response-response (R-R) approaches as well. S-R methods are considered to be more precise

than R-R methods in pinpointing causes of behavior, but both are needed to map the currents and crosscurrents of social behavior. Field studies that make extensive use of interviews are also important sources of information. Although scientific control of confounding variables is more difficult in field studies, such studies do have the advantage of being able to investigate social problems on a large scale and explore a variety of possible interpretations simultaneously. There is a recent trend, too, with respect to conducting psychological experiments of the S-R type in natural settings as a way of investigating problems with a high degree of social relevance.





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Nancy Palmer  
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# Chapter 2

## The Association Motive

It can be argued that the basic fact in social psychology is that individuals both seek and avoid one another. This fact lies at the center of a whole complex of intriguing questions. Why are people attracted or repelled? Why do they seek some but not others? What effect does attraction or avoidance have on the persons concerned? How are attraction and avoidance expressed?

These questions are fundamental to all the research and theory building that constitutes the special area of scientific endeavor we call social psychology.

In this chapter we are principally concerned with social attraction. For one thing, attraction is generally a more important factor than avoidance; for another, avoidance is likely to derive its significance from the fact that social attraction is the more prevalent form of



behavior. When others avoid us, we are upset because we expect or seek a relationship characterized by mutual attraction. Conversely, we may use the same technique on people who have incurred our displeasure. We can be reasonably sure that our avoidance will upset them, because we know that association with others has some kind of positive value for everyone. The need to associate with others is universal and overriding and may be considered as a basic human need or motive.

*The association motive:  
classic explanations*

The universality of social attraction can be explained in terms of the fact that the human infant must spend years in a state of dependency, during which period his needs can be satisfied only through others. The infant thus learns that the presence of others is related to the satisfaction of physical needs—that is, to satiation, warmth, comfort, and safety.

This theory has a great deal to recommend it. For one thing, it is consistent with psychological learning theory in the sense that the infant's turning to others produces rewards which serve to reinforce social responses on his part. These responses thus possess a degree of instrumental value in that they accomplish something the infant needs to have done. The process continues beyond infancy as well, for the child gets into the habit of associating with others, even though such behavior is not always rewarded or reinforced. The fact that the reinforcement is on an intermittent schedule does not impair the strength of the social response. Research with various schedules of reinforcement shows that partial reinforcement is more likely to evoke sustained response patterns than is complete or 100% reinforcement (Jenkins & Stanley, 1950).

*The association motive:  
instrumental explanations*

In addition to learning to associate with others, we are also likely to learn, as children, that, by cooperating with others and complying with their wishes, we can enlist their aid in helping us satisfy many of our needs. This learning pattern continues into adulthood, for we are continually reminded that we need the help of others in maintaining and protecting ourselves. Food gathering is more efficient if there is cooperation, collaboration, and division of labor; shelters are more substantial if others, who are expert, skilled, and well-organized, plan and build them; individuals are also more effective in their ability to withstand attacks and disasters if they participate in social arrangements than if they try to cope alone.

It is obvious, however, that such explanations of social attraction leave a great deal of social interaction unexplained. They do not explain why people get together when there is no practical advantage to be gained or when practical considerations would suggest independent action rather than group interaction. Probably most social interaction has little if anything to do with matters of survival. Behavior resulting from sexual urges is, of course, essential for the survival of the race, as is the nurturant behavior of parents; but as powerful as these drives are, they are not sufficient to explain the whole range of behavior that leads to association with others.

The idea that individuals seek out others in order to learn how to cope with their environment more effectively is another variation of the instrumental theory. Social interaction undoubtedly facilitates some kinds of learning of this type and may indeed be fundamental to most of it. For example, the zoologist Alison Jolly (1964) presents arguments, based on his own research and the research of others, that

the social organization of monkeys and other primates (including man) preceded the development of the ability to invent and to manipulate tools. Jolly found that lemurs, a primitive type of primate, have complex social organizations and display behavior that results from social learning. Through imitation, lemurs learn what foods to eat and what to avoid, how to protect themselves against predators, and how to behave toward one another. They do not, however, possess the skill and ingenuity in solving mechanical problems that characterize the laboratory performance of, say, rhesus monkeys, who are higher on the phylogenetic scale. A primate who can invent and use tools is obviously better able to cope with his environment than one who cannot, and we might reason that the need to cope more effectively with the environment should be in itself sufficient incentive for developing the ability. But Jolly's work puts a different light on the matter because it suggests that the ability to manipulate the physical environment may be acquired at least partly because of its social value. Learning to use a tool may be rewarding because it enables one to accomplish a needed task, but the process of imitation itself may be a source of satisfaction. It can be observed that humans, as well as monkeys, learn many techniques because they provide a basis for interaction with others, that is, the techniques are learned primarily because of the social value they possess, rather than because of their long-range or short-range utilitarian value. We learn to read because other children are reading and because we want to please adults who are interested in having us read; and this occurs long before we have any practical need for the information contained in books.

It thus appears that the need to associate with others may have some basis other than the instrumental one of getting others to help us meet survival needs. This is not to deny the

importance of instrumental goals in our learning to seek the company of others, but the fact that association with others seems to have a reward value independent of survival considerations suggests that other factors may be involved. For example, social attraction might derive from what could be termed a "social instinct."

### *Explanations based on theories of instinct*

Although behavioral scientists in this country have come to prefer theories of behavior that do not include the concept of instinct, or that at least relegate it to a minor role, many European scientists still find it an attractive and useful idea. In effect, the instinct theory holds that people associate with others because they are biologically organized in such a way that seeking the company of others becomes universal and inescapable.

There may be a considerable degree of validity in this idea, for organisms at all levels of the phylogenetic scale seek out and associate with others of their kind. For example, white-footed mice that had been confined alone sought out and remained in each other's company when they were brought together in like-sexed pairs. Although the members of the pairs had markedly different patterns of behavior when alone, their behavior changed, becoming more like that of the other, when they were brought together (Kavanau, 1967). Latané and Glass (1968) also found that laboratory rats are attracted to and reduce fear for each other in situations in which they are alone in an open field and have no place to seek shelter. Individual rats, when repeatedly exposed to another rat, became increasingly eager to associate with it. Inanimate objects, like toys, did not become more attractive to them. In other words, the presence of the other rat came to have positive value, and the toys did not.

It is possible that man, too, may be innately motivated to help others—to be altruistic, as Donald T. Campbell (1965) has suggested. At least one experiment has shown that altruistic behavior is in itself rewarding, inasmuch as individuals will perform tasks for which the only reward is the deliverance of another human being from suffering (Weiss et al., 1971). If there is an instinct to help others, it may very well underlie behavior related to association. In other words, we may seek the company of others in order to find someone to help.

Although social instinct theories have a degree of appeal, their attractiveness seems to be due to the fact that they appear to explain more than they actually do. To say that associating with or helping others is instinctive merely affirms that such behavior occurs universally, and does not account for the great range and variety of activity displayed by individual members of any given species in their associations with one another. Man's social behavior shows the widest degree of variation, resulting in part from his greater capacity to learn, a subject we examine in Chapter 4.

Even if organisms are biologically organized to socialize, however, the social psychologist finds it more fruitful to study the conditions under which socialization is more likely to take place, what stimulates and inhibits it, and so forth. Although the main interest of the social psychologist is focused on social interaction, this does not mean that he is not interested in biological causes and effects. The latter can, in fact, be quite fascinating, yet there is the problem of where to draw the line, where to delimit the area of study. As a matter of general practice, the circle of interest is usually drawn wide enough to include biological phenomena that seem to be directly or obviously related to social behavior.

In that connection, research in recent years has turned up some findings that point to a rela-

tionship between cognitive and social behavior, on the one hand, and the chemistry and structure of the brain, on the other. We shall touch on some of this research in the course of our fourth explanation of social attraction: the need for stimulation.

### *The need for stimulation*

We have raised questions about our first three explanations of social attraction, largely because they do not explain enough behavior. What we need, then, is a theory which accounts for social behavior that has no obvious survival value, either in infancy or adulthood, and that is nevertheless a factor in all social interaction.

Let us start with the proposition that all organisms are, to some degree, stimulus seeking. At the very simplest level, the search is for stimuli that enable the organism to maintain and reproduce itself. As we go up the phylogenetic scale, organisms show an increasing tendency to seek and expose themselves to stimuli that are less obviously related to maintenance and that seem to have no utilitarian aim. After learning the shortest route through the maze to the feedbox, rats will take the longer route and explore blind alleys; a hungry rat, before settling down to eat, will explore novel features of his surroundings (Chance & Mead, 1955). Infants prefer to look at complex visual presentations rather than simple ones, and the degree of complexity preferred is positively correlated with age (Berlyne, 1966; Brennan, Ames, & Moore, 1966).

Experiments with rats raised in "stimulus-enriched" environments, when contrasted with those raised in "impoverished" conditions, show that they develop greater thickness of cortical tissue (the "thinking" area of the brain). This development is accompanied by increases in cholinesterase and acetylcholinesterase, chemicals essential to neural activity. In other

words, the research shows not only that growing up in a stimulating environment improves competence in problem solving but also that such improvement is reflected in differences in the structure and chemistry of the brain (Bennett, Diamond, Krech, & Rosenzweig, 1964).

Stimuli have the effect of stress on the organism. Mild stress evokes a barely noticeable level of arousal, whereas strong stress increases tension to painful levels and beyond. Organisms must maintain tension within a certain range in order to function at an optimal level. Environmental stimuli play an important role in producing tension, particularly with lower organisms. Animals higher on the phylogenetic scale are capable of generating and maintaining tensions at a level less independently of the external environment, although the environment is an ever-ready source of tension-producing stimuli. Thus the hungry rat who postpones eating to explore an unfamiliar environment, and the infant, who turns his gaze toward complex patterns in preference to simple ones, are both seeking stimulus-rich environments to experience arousal and maintain tension at more satisfying levels. Stimulation, arousal, and tension are reduced when the rat stops exploring and goes to his food and the infant looks at a pattern simpler than the more complex pattern that has been presented to him. As Figure 2-1 shows, infants tend not only to prefer more complex stimuli with each increment in age but to look at them longer. Data presented in this figure are from an experiment in which 30 infants, 3, 8, and 14 weeks old, were presented with four stimuli of four levels of complexity: a  $2 \times 2$  checkerboard, an  $8 \times 8$  checkerboard, a  $24 \times 24$  checkerboard (the most complex), and a plain gray card (the simplest). The infants were more attracted to the greater complexity of checkerboards than to the gray card, and older infants found the more complex designs more interesting than the simpler ones (Brennan, Ames, & Moore, 1966).

This trend continues throughout the years of growth and development into adulthood. In general, adults seek out and enjoy more complex arrangements of stimuli, and enjoy them for longer periods than do children and adolescents. To be sure, children and adolescents seek out some kinds of situations, like body-contact sports and surfing, which are highly stressful and produce a great deal of arousal and tension, but such arrangements of stimuli are relatively simple as compared, say, to playing bridge and are interspersed with periods in which the individual avoids stimulation as much as possible, to achieve complete relaxation and rest. In contrast with children and adolescents, adults are likely to seek complex arrangements of stimuli that produce moderate degrees of stress and tend to maintain their contact with these stimuli over relatively long periods.

Stimulation depends not only on complexity

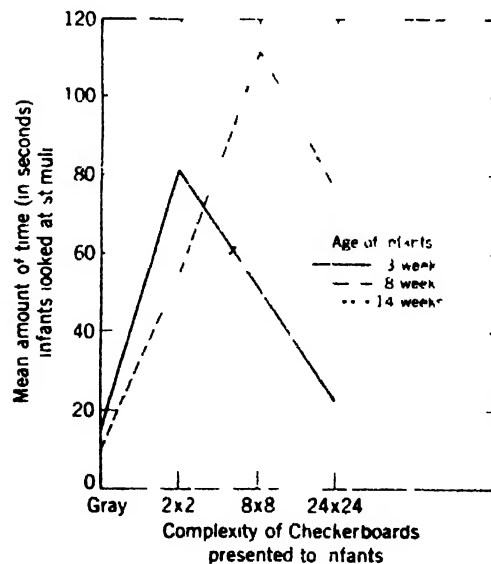


Figure 2-1. Attractiveness of stimuli of varying degrees of complexity for infants at different ages (Brennan, Ames, & Moore, 1966)

but on novelty as well. Both complexity and novelty are what D. E. Berlyne (1970) calls *collative variables*. His experiments show that adult subjects report greater amounts of pleasure and interest as visual stimuli become increasingly novel. Indeed, the fact that people continually attempt to augment their pleasure by seeking new sources of stimulation and arousal has led Constantine A. Doxiadis (1970), Greek urban planner and founder of *ekistics*, the science of human settlements, to say:

In this, man differs from the animals; we do not know of any species of animals that try to increase their potential contacts with the environment once they have reached the optimum number of contacts. Man alone always seeks to increase his contacts [p. 393].

### *Stimulation as a facilitator of effectiveness*

The study by Bennett and others cited above suggests that exposing young animals to elevated levels of stimulation prepares them to cope with higher levels of arousal and greater degrees of environmental complexity. Another study showing the value of stimulus enrichment was done with rat pups who had smaller brains than normal and hence were less intelligent. The mentally-deficient pups were raised either in a restricted or in a stimulus-enriched environment, as were pups from normal litters. At maturity, when each group of rats was tested in maze-running problems, the groups raised in enriched environments made fewer errors than those raised in restricted environments. Although the performance of the mentally-retarded rats did not, of course, equal that of the normal rats, the improvement in performance, produced by the environmental enrichment, had an even greater effect on the brain-stunted than on the normal rats (Rabe & Haddad, 1970).

It is naturally much more difficult to conduct adequately-controlled studies of the effect of

environmental enrichment on human young, but those that have been done, with such controls as can be maintained, show results consistent with those of the animal studies. In one study, five premature infants were gently massaged for five minutes each hour, 24 hours a day, for ten days. In contrast to five control prematures, the handled infants were more active, gained weight faster, and appeared to be physically healthier in terms of growth and motor development. When the infants were followed up some seven or eight months later, all of the handled infants were healthy and normal, whereas only one of the control infants was developing normally. Although the number of subjects in this study was small, the results are intriguing and are consistent with those of other studies of early stimulation (Sol-koff et al., 1969).

Most of the studies of environmental enrichment have been concerned with the social as well as the physical environment. Wayne Dennis (1968) has for a number of years been conducting a longitudinal study of the development of orphans who as infants and young children were adopted from an orphanage in Beirut, Lebanon, over a period of years. As long as the children remained in the orphanage, their IQ remained at approximately 50, which is about the lowest ever reported for any group of institutionalized but otherwise normal children. What a mean IQ of 50 signifies is that the intelligence of children in this orphanage was developing at an extremely slow rate, as compared to the pace at which the intelligence of normal children develops. Dennis found, however, that when children were adopted, their intelligence began to develop at a normal rate. Children adopted during the first year of life, therefore, had IQ's within the normal range, whereas those who were adopted later improved their IQ's over 50, but were unable to overcome the handicap incurred during the years they had spent in the orphanage.

Figure 2-2 shows schematically the hypothetical relationship among the various rates of intellectual development for adopted and non-adopted children. The top diagonal line in the graph represents the average intellectual growth of children under normal conditions. The IQ's of an unselected group of such children should average approximately 100 at whatever point in time they are tested. The bottom diagonal represents the intellectual growth of children in the Beirut orphanage. Although they made gains, it was at a slower than-normal rate and averaged about 50 irrespective of when it was tested. The intellectual growth rate of children adopted at age 2, however, almost immediately shifted to a normal pace, but, because of the delay of their entry into a normal environment, they were unable to attain a mean

IQ of 100, and, instead, tested at 90. Similar effects obtained for children adopted at other ages.

Dennis' findings show that the two different social environments, the orphanage and the adoptive home, had quite different effects on the intellectual development of children. One strong probability is that the differences were due to the differing amounts of social stimulation and attention received by the children. The children in the orphanage numbered about 100 and were in the charge of five nuns, who did their best to care for the children. Their interest in, and concern for the children is shown by the fact that the program of adoption which they initiated is unique among Middle East orphanages. However, a ratio of one adult to twenty children is quite different from the

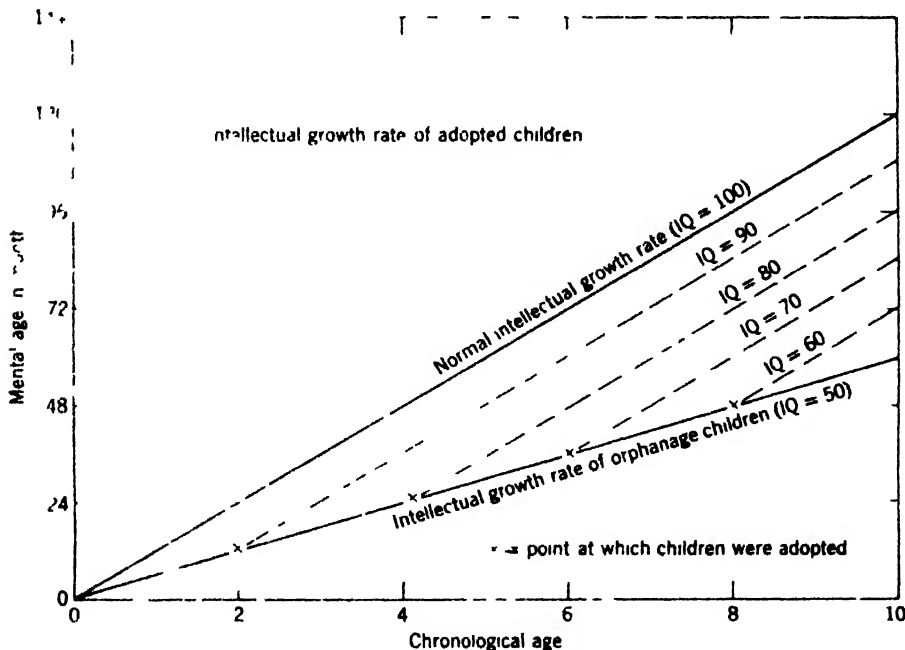


Figure 2-2 A schematic representation of the hypothetical intellectual growth pattern of adopted and non-adopted orphans in Beirut, Lebanon (Dennis, 1968) (The statistics reported in this diagram are estimates and approximations of the findings and conclusions of Dennis, who has seen and approved the diagram.)

adult-to-child ratio that exists even in large families. Therefore, the most obvious difference between the orphanage and adoptive homes is the greater amount of attention and social stimulation available in the latter environment.

A question may well be put at this point in our discussion. This is all very well for children and rats, but how does it apply to adults? As a starting point for an answer to this question, let us consider these vignettes from everyday life.

Gary Fister had a chance to return to his hometown high school to take a well-paying job as a mathematics teacher, but chose instead to join the Peace Corps for two poorly paid, but adventurous years.

Pedro Fontes told his wife Maria that she should pack their things and get herself and their three children ready because tomorrow they were going to start off on foot for Brasilia, five hundred miles away. Maria objected, pointing out that although they had little to eat and no money, at least they had a roof over their heads. Furthermore, they had always got along on the few *crazitos* Pedro had earned through occasional work at the fazenda near the village, and there was no guarantee that he would find work in Brasilia. But Pedro had his mind set on going, and there was no talking him out of it.

Gambling houses employ people called *shills*, whose only job is to gamble with the house's money at tables where there is no action.

These examples may be multiplied many times. Many people, who find themselves free to choose among various kinds of jobs, make their decision on the basis of opportunities for interesting work and adventure. In effect, Gary Fister is choosing a novel, potentially-

stimulating situation in favor of one that is more familiar and therefore less challenging.

Pedro Fontes's journey in thousands of migrants who in almost every country of the world are turning away from the slow, monotonous life of rural communities and seeking the more unstable and hazardous but at the same time more exciting and more stimulating life in the city. And gambling halls use shills to attract people to empty tables because they know that most people do not like to gamble alone. In fact, the stimulation of a person's interest when people cluster around a game is great.

These three vignettes are given here in the sense that they show the various choices that will be made by people in different situations. Gary Fister chose to leave his hometown for Brasilia. And the shills who sit at the gambling tables where people do not play in order to be sought out by gamblers are themselves usually overpaid for their job of doing nothing, but they however, in some way, are motivated by situations that have some degree of novelty, novelty of unpredictable and therefore provide more stimulation in the consequent increase of action.

See Figure 2-3. In the following we provided a picture of a subject's choice of fun and entertainment. The subject was a Chinese ideogram or character artist. He had 18 subjects. Some of them were asked to draw only once in the series, but most of them varied from twice to ten times. Some of the ideograms were simple, consisting of only a few brush strokes; others were quite complex. After the subject had seen the card, he was shown them again (together with some he had not seen) and asked to indicate on a scale ranging from -5 (extreme dislike) to +5 (extreme liking), how much he liked them. As Figure 2-3 shows, the subjects consistently preferred complex

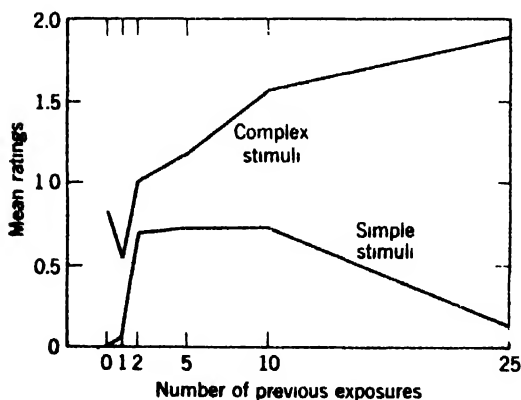
stimuli, with the differences being most dramatic for stimuli to which they had been exposed repeatedly.

### *Social situations as sources of stimulation and tension*

What Saegert and Jellison's experiment shows is that, with repeated exposure, simple stimuli become banal, while complex stimuli continue to involve and interest the observers. To use the phraseology that has come out of computer technology, complex stimuli contain more information than simple stimuli. Man is an information processor, in the sense that he processes (through perception and other cognitive operations) information provided by stimuli. Stimuli that contain more information require more processing than those containing less information; therefore, complex, novel, and continually-changing stimuli involve the individual more and are, under ordinary circumstances, more interesting and attractive than those that are simple. Individuals are generally more interesting than nonhuman

objects because they are more complex, less predictable, and, as a consequence, generate more information to be processed.

Among the most dependable sources of stimulation, stress, arousal, and tension are situations in which individuals interact with others—social situations. There is a degree of unpredictability and novelty about even the most conventional encounter. The presence of another person arouses us: we must cope with him and respond to him. Even the decision not to respond to another is one which must be made and which occasions a degree of arousal and tension. Charles H. Cooley (1902) commented on the negative aspects of the presence of others, how the "sense of other persons" and the awareness that one is being observed may evoke a feeling of vague discomfort, tension, and self-doubt. What he was describing, of course, are the conditions under which tension begins to become uncomfortable. These can be matched by other experiences in which we are bored at being alone and hence deliberately seek the kinds of stresses and tensions that are inevitably a part of interacting with others. The many studies and reports of psychological disorganization resulting from social isolation show how dependent we are on the presence of others (Brownfield, 1965). Social interaction may be stressful, but it is infinitely more welcome than prolonged or even temporary isolation.



**Figure 2-3.** Subject's mean ratings, in terms of degree of liking, of simple and complex Chinese ideograms, as related to the number of times the ideograms had been exposed to them (Saegert & Jellison, 1970).

### *The control of stress and tension*

Although novelty and complexity are attractive because they are stimulating, it is obvious that there are limits to the amount of stimulation we can tolerate comfortably; nor is stimulation always welcome. Everyday observation shows that stimulation is enjoyed to the extent we can control it. When this control is out of our hands, stimulation becomes less enjoyable. We might



enjoy the stimulation of picking up and reading a play by Shakespeare or browsing through Rousseau, but when Shakespeare and Rousseau are made the subjects of class assignments and the decision to read them is taken out of our control, they are not as interesting. It is fun to play tennis with someone who is our equal in skill, or who is somewhat inferior, because we can predict and, to some extent, anticipate the course of the game, and thus maintain some degree of control. Playing tennis with an expert is a totally different matter, since it is he, not we, who determines where the ball will go and how far and how fast we will have to run to hit it or, more likely, miss it. The pace of the game and the resulting degree of stress is his choice, not ours.

One of the reasons we prefer social situations that have some degree of familiarity is that this familiarity enables us to predict, anticipate, and thus control somewhat the course of events and the social stimulation we will experience. The amount of desired social stimulation will, of course, vary from time to time. When we are bored, we may deliberately seek the company of people who are quite different from us, as did Gary Fister and Pedro Fontes; but when we have been put under severe stress, we are likely to want less, rather than more, stimulation. After a grueling final examination in chemistry, students will often gather for a few minutes of "post-mortem," during which time they talk over the questions they missed or did particularly well on. What they are seeking is not an increase in stimulation but stimulation at a reduced level that will both relax and reassure. The post-mortem group consists of acquaintances or, at least, of people who have been through the same experience, and there is a degree of acceptance and mutual understanding that one would not find in just *any* group. Such an encounter is not *unstimulating*, but consists of mild stimulation that can be terminated at any time by leaving the group.

The amount of physical distance we maintain between ourselves and others provides us with one control of the amount of stress or arousal we wish to feel. Inasmuch as other people are a source of stimulation, it follows that at times, when stress is too high for comfort, we would want to place more distance between them and us and thus not increase stress. Dosey and Meisels (1969) conducted a simple experiment which demonstrates that principle. They asked subjects to approach members of the same, or opposite, sex under nonstress or stress conditions. In the nonstress situation, subjects were told that the study was one of reflex behavior, that they were to relax and behave naturally. Under the stress condition, they were told that the person they were approaching was making an appraisal of their physical appearance and sexual attractiveness, qualities that are obviously related to personal success. As Figure 2-4 shows, subjects increased the distance between themselves and the target persons under the stress condition.

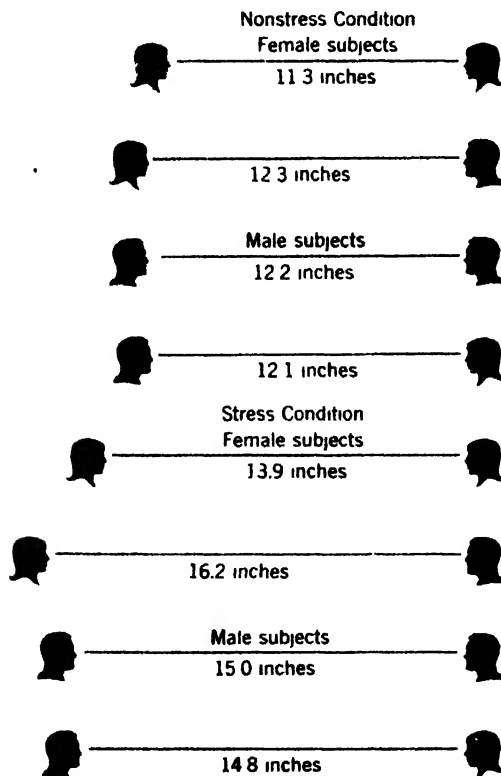
We are, of course, unable to exercise control of perceptual input at all times. Sometimes, our cognitive systems become oversaturated with information and are unable to process it adequately. As the situation gets out of hand, we may experience a feeling of personal inadequacy, or even panic. In other words, one outcome of an overload of percepts is, as Paul McReynolds (1956) puts it, anxiety—a risk we incur when we expose ourselves to situations that change rapidly, and that increase the amount of information that must be processed. Alan Toffler has written in his book, *Future Shock*,<sup>1</sup> of the overstress and overload generated by the rapid changes and social tensions of urban life today. It is understandable why we often turn to less stressful tasks and more familiar situations that, in turn, enable us to deal with percepts at a slower rate. Inevitably,

<sup>1</sup>New York: Random House, 1970.

however, boredom and monotony set in, and we once again seek situations that are complex, novel, and unpredictable. The traveler is glad to get back to familiar surroundings after a long and strenuous trip, but after a few weeks of rest and rehabilitation, he is eager to sally forth once again. As some wit has said, "I would rather be stimulated to death than bored to death."

### Task performance and stress

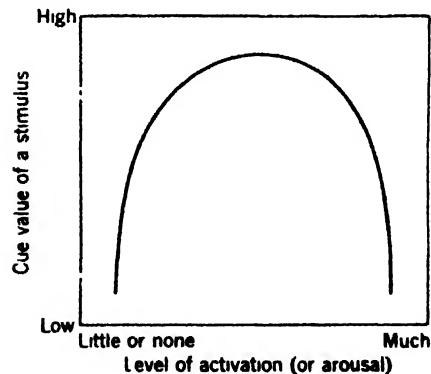
Although task performance is not directly rele-



**Figure 2-4.** Mean distances at which subjects stopped when approaching male or female targets under nonstress and stress conditions (Dosey & Meisels, 1969). (The heads at the right represent the target persons.)

vant to the reasons why we seek to associate with others, it is related to the topic of coping with stress-induced tension (or anxiety), and we will deal with it here. Actually, it is not completely unrelated to social motivation, because we often choose tasks that involve association with others, probably because they provide the opportunity to socialize, and possibly because we are aware that the presence of others will have some kind of facilitative effect.

The relationship between arousal and performance has been a subject of considerable study on the part of psychologists in recent years, although it was originally propounded by Robert M. Yerkes and J. D. Dodson (1907) over sixty years ago. The relationship may be described as an inverted U (Hebb, 1955a). As Figure 2-5 shows, performance reaches its peak when tension or arousal is in the middle ranges. When the degree of tension is minimal, performance is likely to suffer. The organism is relaxed, feels no need to act or to cope with the environment, and is generally passive. As



**Figure 2-5.** The relationship between level of arousal and performance (Hebb, 1955a). ("Level of arousal" can be interpreted as the tension, anxiety, or stress experienced by the individual, whereas "cue value of a stimulus" is an indicator of the level of performance that has been elicited by the situation he faces.)

the environment becomes more stimulating, presents more problems, more unexpected events, and thus becomes more stressful, the organism becomes more attentive, is aroused, becomes somewhat more tense or anxious, and becomes prepared to cope with things. But as stress, tension, and anxiety increase even more, and as the organism becomes still further aroused, it becomes increasingly less able to deal with the situation. This relationship between tension and performance seems to hold whether we are speaking of problem solving, learning, interpersonal relations, or any other kind of situation that calls for coping behavior.

In the foregoing examples, the amount of tension varies with changes taking place in the environment. It should also be noted that individuals may also vary in the amount of tension they generate. One individual may have a generally relaxed or apathetic reaction to events that others find highly stressful, whereas another may live in a chronic anxiety state in an environment that others find calm and placid. In either event, performance will obviously suffer. Social psychologists are not generally concerned, however, with individual variations in tension, except as they are related to generalized classes of variables, such as culture, social class, and group climate.

### *Avoidance behavior*

In general, we avoid others for the opposite reason that we are attracted to them. In other words, we avoid them when they cannot satisfy our needs or drives. One reason, which we have already given, is that we are satiated with stimulation. Another reason, that we have also proposed, is that certain individuals are able to exercise more control over our input of stimulation than we can. As an example, when we are in the mood to socialize, we are generally less

likely to seek out persons in authority over us because they have more power than we have to control the social situation. We have to defer to them, laugh at their jokes, and act in various ways to maintain the senior-junior relationship. We have to be more than usually careful of what we are saying, and are not as free to leave and thus terminate the interaction. Nor do we usually seek out the company of people who are hostile to us or who hold views that are antithetical to our values, for the necessity to be ready to attack and defend leaves us less free to "be ourselves." Perhaps these individuals do have something we want in the way of providing social interaction, but they also have something that interferes with our ability to see that our own interests are served.

In actuality, of course, no social situation is a completely free one. There are, as we shall point out in subsequent chapters, social forces that limit and predetermine our behavior to a much greater degree than we are generally aware. When we are interacting with our peers, however, these pressures are more likely to be equalized for all participants, whereas when we react with people of significantly higher status or who are hostile to us, the situation becomes unbalanced, and we must continually work to adapt ourselves to the unequal power ratio, or, in the case of hostile persons, to adjust the balance in our favor.

We should not terminate this discussion of attraction and repulsion without noting that we may be attracted to others for negative or hostile reasons; that is, we may wish to injure, embarrass, or humiliate them because we perceive them as a threat, or because we see them as symbolizing something that runs contrary to our values. Such behavior may be, however, a special case of attraction because of the need for stimulation. Altercations are almost always accompanied by a state of arousal, and the person who is "looking for a fight" is likely to wel-

come such arousal. The point is that interaction with others is potentially stimulating and this is what makes them attractive, irrespective of whether we are attracted to them for friendly or for hostile reasons.

### *Other psychological needs*

Some theories of personality—that of Abraham Maslow (1954), for example—state that the human organism has a need to be loved or to receive attention. Proponents of such theories hold that, if the need for love or attention is not met in some way, the organism may develop pathological symptoms and may even die. This idea runs through much psychoanalytic thinking about mental health. The need for love or attention may actually be a variant of the general need for stimulation we discussed in the previous section. On the other hand, it may actually be of a somewhat different order, because it specifies a particular *kind* of stimulation.

We shall discuss Maslow's need system in somewhat more detail in Chapter 5, so shall present only its main elements here. Briefly, the system categorizes the basic human needs into five major groups: physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization. The ranking is from the more primitive to the most highly developed, and each is considered basic to the one that follows. The need for safety or personal security, therefore, has priority over the need for love or attention—an individual, who feels his personal safety threatened, is not likely to be very interested in giving or receiving love.

We mention the need for safety or security at this point, because our association with others may be seen as a way of using them to satisfy that need. A society protects its individual members against the ravages of the physical environment and against aggression and

harassment on the part of other individuals or groups. Because societies have structure and a degree of permanence, they make life somewhat more orderly and predictable and consequently less chancy for their members. The price a society exacts from its members is conformity, of course, but it is a price that we all pay, usually unaware that we are doing so, for the feeling of security that others, individually and collectively, are able to give us.

The fourth need on Maslow's list—esteem—is also gained in a group context, for it is based on the degree of acceptance we have from others. In satisfying this need, we are drawn to associate with others, because it is through them that we learn to evaluate ourselves. As we note in the following section, it is through our membership in the social group that we gain a sense of our identity and meaning.

It can also be argued that each of us has a basic need to be aware of his own reality. The fact that others interact with us and direct attention toward us is an indication that we do exist. Every touch, every word or glance directed toward us is an affirmation of our reality, as well as an indicator of the kind of reality we represent.

If this line of reasoning has any validity, it may provide yet another clue as to why we find association with others rewarding: it enables us to receive attention, and reaffirms our reality. It also helps explain why attention directed toward others, instead of toward ourselves, may be disconcerting at times and arouse feelings of hostility (jealousy) within us. Such attention may be interpreted as a kind of denial of our own reality, and an indication that others are more real (more important) than we are.

Although such ideas are speculative and, in fact, infringe on territory claimed by philosophy and metaphysics, we put them forth here because they may serve as an additional

and possible explanation of why the drive to associate with others is both persistent and pervasive.

## *The Need for Structure and Meaning*

### *Structure and relationship*

The need to have some degree of order and predictability in life is far more complex and has more potential for influence than we are ordinarily aware of. The underlying motive may be described as a need for *meaning*, a term that seems obvious but that calls for interpretation and definition.

Uncertainty may have a profoundly disorganizing and upsetting effect on the individual. Man's attempts to resolve uncertainty and to bring order to his world have led to his preoccupation with a "search for meaning" (Bartlett, 1932; Cantril, 1950; Krech & Crutchfield, 1948; Newcomb, 1950).

"Meaning," as used in this sense, refers to the perceived relationships among events—that is, among objects, persons, institutions, occurrences, and so forth. The particular kind of relationship that is of greatest interest to us is, of course, the relationship between events and ourselves. Any event possesses meaning for us in terms of the relationship we perceive between it and our needs. Meaning may also result from the perception of the relationship between two or more objects or events; but what gives such a relationship its meaning is the fact that it is perceived. Thus the perceiver always plays a part in meaning. The perception of an event, whose meaning has not been ascertained, induces feelings of doubt, insecurity, and anxiety, because we do not know whether the event is potentially threatening, benign, or neutral, nor do we know whether it calls for us to modify our behavior, continue what we

are doing, or become inactive. We are awakened at three in the morning by a thumping noise and a crash in another part of the house. We have a sensation of anxiety, even panic, because we do not know what the sound means. What does the sound have to do with us? Is it a burglar? Is it a strange animal? None of these answers seem reasonable, yet our anxiety remains unabated until we get up to see what it is. It turns out to be a vase, upset by a sudden gust of wind coming through an open window. Gazing on the mess of broken glass, water, and flowers on the floor, we feel annoyed, but nevertheless there is a sense of relief because we now know the meaning of the sound.

The process of giving an ambiguous situation order or structure gives it meaning by clarifying the relationship among the various events or objects, including ourselves, that make up the situation. Once this order has been established, the situation assumes a certain degree of predictability because we know what to anticipate and how we should behave.

The experience of attending college for the first time is a good example of how a confusing, ambiguous situation may generate feelings of inadequacy and anxiety, and how these feelings diminish as we discover the relationship among objects and events and the meaning they have for us.

George Stern, a new student, enters the administration building of Megaloid University. He wants to begin the process of registration for the fall term, but he does not know where to go. He sees a sign over a door that says "Office of Admissions," but does not know whether it applies to him or not. This is the office that admitted him to the university, and he wonders if he should pick up some documents or papers there. At any rate, he might find the answer to his questions. He enters the door, only to find a long line of students patiently waiting to see a clerk behind a win-

dow. The line does not seem to be moving, and George has a slightly panicky feeling while he tries to decide whether he should join it, or commit the unforgivable sin of going to the head of the line to ask his question.

He asks one of the people in line why they are waiting, and learns that they are persons who applied for admission after the deadline and who petitioned for special consideration. Since George applied long before the deadline and has received a letter to the effect that he has been admitted, he realizes that he does not belong in the line. What was an ambiguous, relatively meaningless situation now has assumed a degree of order and structure, and he now knows what his action should be: namely, leave the room and seek his answer elsewhere.

During the first few days, George has this type of experience repeatedly. By trial and error, coupled with shrewd guesswork, he discovers which lines he should be standing in and what actions he should initiate. The campus, itself, at first a confused conglomeration of buildings, begins to make sense. One of the buildings is the student union, which will occupy a central position in his life, for it is there that he finds refreshment, information, and people with whom he can socialize. In the process of identifying the other buildings, he also determines their relationship to him. The low edifice near the gymnasium is the student health center. George learned this when he was directed there for his physical examination, and he made a note of its location. As a person with chronic upper respiratory infections, this building has special meaning for him. By the afternoon of George's first day, the campus has assumed sufficient structure and meaning for him to direct other new students to the post office and the men's residence halls.

Although situations encountered by George Stern during the first days of registration and instruction rapidly took on meaning, there

were many times when he experienced feelings of apprehension, inadequacy, irritation, and anxiety. These feelings were strongest when he was not sure what he should do next, when he found himself doing something without knowing why, such as standing in a line or filling out a form, or when he found that he had inadvertently done something that either was not necessary or might even cause future difficulties. The next term, however, things went much more smoothly. By this time, George had a fairly good understanding of the system, knew what he was supposed to do, which lines to join and which to ignore, and how to proceed efficiently toward his objective of registering for classes. The registration situation had taken on more meaning for him, for he had a good understanding of how the events and objects in the situation were related to one another and to him.

Let us now turn to the question of how George happened to be involved in the confusion of registration in the first place. He grew up in Micro City, a small town some fifty miles from the nearest major urban area. On graduating from high school, some of his friends elected to attend the local junior college, and others went to distant schools which their parents had attended or which offered training in special fields of interest. Like many high school graduates, George had no specific occupational goals, hence, he was not interested in schools that offered special training. He was under no pressure from his parents to attend one college or another, since they themselves were not college graduates. They did suggest he attend Micro Junior College so that he could live at home, but George felt strongly motivated to leave the town, where he had grown up, and to live away from home. He chose a large university, well-known throughout the region, and located in the suburbs of a metropolis. Like Pedro Fontes, in the brief vignette we presented earlier in this chapter, George left the

even-paced, relatively quiet environment of the small town for the stimulating environment of a university located in an urban area. For George, such a move might appear to be a step toward uncertainty and meaninglessness, but it was a move that solved a number of problems for him. For one thing, it determined what he would be doing for the next four years, and thus resolved his indecision as to what to do after high school. The greater freedom George would experience living away from home would create ambiguities for him, but ambiguities can be ordered and structured, and such ordering and structuring can also be sources of satisfaction. His home town had lost its attraction for him. Like Gary Fister, who joined the Peace Corps, he sought a situation that had both novelty and stress, but which also had an order and a stability of its own.

### *Meaning through identity*

There are two basic ways in which interaction with others can provide meaning. One is through identity and the other through definition. Identity tells us who we are, in a positive sense—whom we resemble, in particular. Definition also tells us who we are, but in a more negative sense, by indicating *differences* between ourselves and others, and between those we resemble and those we do not resemble. Definition sets limits to identity.

The kind of meaning represented by identity, as Daniel R. Miller (1963) points out, is universally recognized and viewed in every society as having social value. He also notes that identity is so basic to all social relationships that it has to be taken into account in research dealing with such fundamental topics as the relationship between social structure and personality, the socialization of children, the dynamics of social motives, and the resolution of inner conflict.

Our association with others thus enables us

to find identities. By noting similarities between ourselves and various individuals or groups, we are able to resolve a considerable degree of ambiguity as to "who we are," that is, what we mean to ourselves as persons and what we mean to others. In symbolic-interactionist terms, as set forth by George Herbert Mead (1934), this process is facilitated by our ability to take on the roles of others and see ourselves as they see us, as well as by our tendency to react to others as though they were ourselves. What makes a society possible, according to Lawrence Kohlberg (1969), is "a structure of interaction between the self and other selves who are like the self, but who are not the self" [p. 398]. These processes will be discussed further in succeeding chapters, when more detail is given about the ways in which membership in groups shapes behavior, attitudes, and self-concepts, but, for the moment, we are concerned with how association with others comes to be attractive. What we are saying, then, is that we take advantage of the opportunity to associate with others because it is through such association that we find similarities between us and them, and that these similarities give us clues as to our identity or meaning.

What people perceive, or do not perceive, is also affected by the degree to which individuals are able to identify themselves with the object to be perceived. James W. Bagby (1957) presented American and Mexican subjects with pairs of photographs, one depicting people in the North American culture, and the other the Mexican culture. The photographs were exposed stereoscopically, so that one eye was focused on the North American scene, the other on the Mexican, and both were seen simultaneously. Each pair of photographs was presented for a one-minute period, during which time the subject told the experimenter what he was seeing. There was a marked tendency for American subjects to report the

details of American pictures and to ignore the Mexican ones, whereas Mexican subjects tended to ignore the American photographs and report on the Mexican ones. Both American and Mexican subjects, therefore, were so strongly conditioned by the cultural groups with which they identified themselves, that they tended to notice or to ignore visual stimuli in terms of this identification. One's social group thus becomes a source of meaning which serves as a frame of reference through which the environment is viewed. This is a subject that will be discussed further in the chapter on culture, society, and the individual.

### *Meaning through definition*

As noted previously, it is as important for us to know what we are not as it is to know what we are. The groups in which our identities are anchored are limited by their boundaries, the line that divides the ingroup member from the outgroup member. George Stern is an American by virtue of the fact that he is a member of the very large national and cultural group called "Americans." When we say that George is an American, we not only identify him, but we also define, that is, set limits to, what he is. Identifying and defining are ways of ordering events. By attaching labels to them (identifying) and determining what they are not (defining), we not only give them more meaning, but we can make some decisions as to how to treat them. If we are Peace Corpsmen in the mountains of Turkey and we hear that there is an American named George Stern in the area, we probably will decide to seek him out to welcome him to this remote area and to socialize with him. In a more usual context, knowing that George Stern is an American leads us to expect that George will exhibit some of the patterns of behavior that are more characteristically American than those that are not. We do not expect him to relax in the storklike, Nilotic

stance, with the right foot braced on the left knee, as people do in the Sudan; we will not expect him to squat on the ground, in the position used by people in most parts of the world outside Europe and North America; and we will not expect him to chew betel nuts or coca leaves.

It usually is not enough to know that George Stern is an American, because this fact does not generally give us enough data on which to make judgments and to behave toward him. Knowing that he is a male, is 18 years old, attends Megaloid University, is an Episcopalian, a member of De Molay, and an Eagle Scout helps us further to identify and define him. This may indeed be enough information for us to decide whether we want to socialize with him, or whether we wish to seek further in order to find someone with whom we perceive a greater degree of similarity. Such memberships and affiliations also have a significant value for George, because without them he literally would not know who he is.

### *Group membership as a reference point*

Just as groups enable us to identify ourselves through the discovery or development of similarities, even so do they serve as a basis for finding differences. Persons affiliated with a group have certain similarities that give them identity and make them functioning members of the group, but each member of the group has certain characteristics not shared with the other members. Each person's participation in the group is marked by some degree of difference. Even the rituals and ceremonies, that are part of the activity of many groups, are performed in slightly different ways by different individuals. These differences are as much a part of the individual as are the similarities he shares with others. The group also figures in the definition of differences, however, just as it does in the definition of similarities.



Identifying and defining differences also brings up the question: Different from what? The answers to this question often show that the group provides the reference point from which differences are determined. When George arrived at Megaloid University, he was assigned to Held Hall, and, when he paid his board and lodging bill, he automatically paid his dues to the Held Hall Association. Being a member of the Association further identifies and defines him on the university campus. It may, for example, determine the role he will play in student politics, and some girls may decide to go out with him, or not, because he is a "Held Hall man."

There are, however, differences between George and the other residents at Held Hall. He is, for example, the only person in the hall from his county, and he is the only one who can play the flute. Yet these differences achieve whatever significance they have only because the rest of the members in the group are from elsewhere and are not flute players. Without a group to differ from, there would be no difference, or, to borrow a concept from Gestalt psychology, without the ground there would be no figure. The fact that the ground provides a contrast enables us to see the figure. In George's flute class, his flute playing does not make him appear different. What makes the difference there is that he is the only male student in a group of six. His masculinity stands out against a background of femininity.

Thus we find in groups not only cues as to who we are, but also cues as to who we are not.

### *The need to associate with others in stress situations*

In times of stress, when the level of arousal is high, there is a common tendency for people to seek some kind of reassurance. But even this general behavioral trend does not affect everyone in the same way. Much depends on

the situation, as well as on the individual's past experience. The past few years have seen a number of studies dealing with this phenomenon, beginning with the work of Stanley Schachter (1959), who conducted research on the psychology of affiliation. In one experiment, Lawrence S. Wrightsman, Jr. (1960) resorted to a clever bit of stage business to raise the anxiety of his subjects. As each subject entered the room set aside for the experiment, he was ushered by a nurse into another room where hypodermic needles, syringes, cotton, alcohol, and other injection equipment were prominently displayed. He was then told that he would be participating in an experiment in which it would be necessary to inject either glucose or a depressant drug directly into the blood stream, and that the injections might be painful. The subject then indicated on a form sheet how at ease or ill at ease he felt about participating in the experiment and was then sent to a waiting room, where one of three conditions prevailed: (1) other subjects were in the room, and talking was permitted; (2) other subjects were in the room, and no talking was permitted; and (3) the subject waited alone. After the waiting period, a second questionnaire was administered. Subjects who waited with others showed more of a drop in anxiety than those who waited alone, but the difference was not statistically significant. The decline was significant, however, for those subjects who were first-born or only children in their family. For such subjects, it did not seem to matter much whether they were allowed to talk or not, for merely being with others reduced their anxiety considerably. As for subjects who were later-born in their families, it made little difference, as far as the reduction in apprehensiveness was concerned, whether they waited alone or with others. Somewhat similar results were reported in a later study by Robert L. Helmreich and Barry E. Collins (1967).

Wrightsman did not attempt to account for

the difference between the laterborns and the firstborn and only children, although he did point out that it must be due to childhood experiences. He suggested that the fact that both firstborn and only children receive more parental attention than laterborn children may be a factor. It would also appear that firstborn children are often given supervisory roles and authority that serves to alienate them at times from their siblings, and only children are more likely to have experience of being alone and isolated from other children. These factors might perhaps lead to an overvaluing of the opportunity to be with others in times of stress.

Wrightsmann did, however, note one effect that occurred when subjects waited with others and were permitted talk. Such interaction tended to produce a degree of uniformity in the anxiety level of the participants. The participants seemed to use one another's experience as a reference point to determine for themselves how much anxiety they should feel. We shall have more to say about this phenomenon when we discuss the development of group norms, but, for the present, we will merely point out that this is an example of how people use groups as a way of giving structure and meaning to ambiguous situations. This use of group interaction, as a way of resolving ambiguity in one's feelings, not only contributes to a feeling of security, but also helps clear the way for deciding what steps one has to take next. In other words, a person, who is under stress and who feels unsure of what to do next, can use his participation in a group as a basis for coming to a decision as to what his attitudes should be with regard to the matter in question, and what his consequent action should be. In this way, social interaction may be seen as a facilitator of individual activity of one kind or another.

Whether this actually facilitates positive forms of behavior, such as improved production or reality-based problem solving, depends,

of course, on the kinds of attitudes and values the group has toward production and problem solving. Still another factor is how the individual group member perceives the group. As the research just described shows, it apparently makes a difference whether the group member was a first-born or a later-born child. Hence, it is difficult to formulate general principles relating to the effect of social interaction or the presence of others on individual behavior. In general, however, it does appear that association with others does have some kind of impact on the individual and that this impact tends to have some degree of positive value, although it is granted that the degree of attraction varies widely from individual to individual, from culture to culture, and from situation to situation. Association with others may also facilitate individual functioning, although the conditions under which facilitation occurs, have to be specified for different individuals. What people receive from their association with others appears to be a reduction of ambiguity in the situations with which they are faced. There are many exceptions to this conclusion as well, but the use of the group as a source of meaning is so widespread and so pervasive that it must be recognized as a recurring factor in the relationships between the individual and the group. It may indeed be a fundamental consideration in all forms of social interaction.

### *Summary*

The overriding tendency of people to seek the company of others is basic to all research and theory in social psychology. The universality of this drive can be explained in terms of the learning that takes place during infancy, when dependency on others is reinforced and rewarded; the need for others' help in accomplishing

tasks and coping with the environment; instinctual drives; and a need for stimulation. Each of these explanations has something to recommend it, although most American psychologists prefer explanations that stress learning more than instinct.

The need for stimulation is a drive that exists to some degree in all organisms. The presence of this need is shown in a variety of behavioral forms, including infants' preferences for complex (rather than simple) visual presentations. The need also appears to have a relationship to effectiveness in functioning: rats, raised in a stimulus-enriched environment, not only have superior problem-solving ability but also develop a thicker cerebral cortex. Environments that are stimulating also appear to enhance development of intellectual functioning on the part of children.

Situations involving social interaction have a high stimulation potential and hence are sources of stress, although the degree of stress may range from mild and almost imperceptible to painful. Social stimulation is more likely to be pleasurable when we are able to control the amount of stress and thus protect ourselves from saturation. Anxiety is one outcome of stimulus saturation. The inverted-U hypothesis may be used to describe the relationship

between stress (or anxiety) and performance, or effectiveness. Very low and very high levels of stress are associated with reduced levels of effectiveness, whereas a moderate degree of stress is associated with superior performance.

The drive to associate with others can also be explained in terms of needs for attention or love, safety or security needs, and esteem needs. Such association also helps us meet the need to be aware of, or to confirm, our own reality. Others also help us learn the meaning of our environment and our relationship to it. Knowing the meaning of events enables us to resolve puzzling and confusing ambiguities that otherwise would cause anxiety. Through our associations with others we learn to impart a degree of structure or meaning to our experiences, and this, in turn, enables us to learn whom we resemble (identity) and whom we do not resemble (definition). One of the chief sources for this type of meaning comes from our association and affiliation with groups. The inducement of emotional stress can heighten the need to associate with others, but it does not have the same effect on everyone. Research has shown that individuals under stress, who were first-born in their family, for example, have a greater need to associate with others than do individuals who were later-born.





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# Chapter 3

## Interpersonal Attraction

Chapter 2 discussed at some length the social drives or motives that are present in all of us. To review some of the points made in that chapter, it appears that while there are practical or obvious reasons for our associating with others—mutual help, protection, sex, reassurance, security—a great deal of our involvement cannot be easily explained in such terms. The basis for this apparently nonfunctional association seems to be the stimulating or arousal effect that others have on us, an effect that generally has positive value, although a saturation level can be reached when stimulation becomes unpleasant. Association with others also provides us with a basis for determining the nature and meaning of our environment and our position therein. In other words, interaction with others enables us to identify and define ourselves and our relationships with the social and physical world.

In this chapter we continue to be concerned with the drive to associate, but turn to those aspects of others, and the situation in which we encounter them, that determine the degree to which we are attracted to them. The fact that we wish to associate with others implies that we are attracted to them, or that we wish to attract them to us.

### *Attraction through Appearance*

Common sense tells us that appearance is the main basis for attraction between strangers and, indeed, that it is necessary to maintain appearances if attraction is to result in any kind of lasting positive relationship. In fact, in everyday language, the term "attractiveness" has reference to the surface aspects of a person or object.

The idea that the appearance is the sole or even the main basis of attraction is somewhat repugnant to psychologists, partly because it does not take into account the readiness of the audience to be attracted, the standards the audience has, and the relationship between the surface aspects of the person and his underlying personal qualities or personality. It also tends to overlook the idea that attraction is likely to be a mutual process. Psychologists are made uneasy also by the implication that surface aspects can be put on, taken off, or changed at will, without reference to the "real self." In research, therefore, the search is for more "significant" variables. This research has been largely successful, but, before reviewing the evidence that supports the psychological approach, it may be well to see whether common-sense ideas about attraction have any validity.

The strongest evidence for the common-sense view comes from an ingenious study conducted at the University of Minnesota with 752 freshmen men and women who paid one dollar each to attend a "Computer Dance" during pre-

registration orientation week. Participants filled out questionnaires under the assumption that the information would be processed by a computer and matched with the personal qualities of a person of the opposite sex, who would then become the "date" for the evening. As participants registered for the dance and filled out the questionnaires, their physical appearance was, unbeknownst to them, quickly rated by four judges, who were assistants of the experimenters. The questionnaire yielded information relating to the self-acceptance and self-esteem of the participant. The University's student personnel files also provided information regarding each participant's high school grades, his academic aptitude (intelligence), and other personality test data. The dance took place two days after the initial data had been collected. Although the participants thought they were being paired by computer, they were actually paired randomly, except that no man was paired with a girl taller than himself.

Participants had been told that there would be a drawing for a \$50 prize during the intermission and that they would get a chance to tell the organizing committee how successful the computer matching had been. This gave the researchers an opportunity to administer another short questionnaire, which asked how much the participant liked his (or her) date, how physically attractive the date seemed to be, how comfortable or uncomfortable he (she) was with his (her) date, how similar to himself (herself) the date seemed to be, and whether the participant would like to date his (her) partner again. In a follow-up survey, conducted four to six months after the dance, participants were asked whether they had attempted to date their "computer date" after the dance at any time.

The results, as shown in Table 3-1, demonstrate clearly that physical attractiveness is a variable of some importance. Subjects were more interested in going out again with attrac-

*Table 3.1. Various Measures of University Freshmen's Liking for Their Dates and Their Desire to Date Their Partners Again (Walster, Aronson, Abraham, & Rottmann, 1966)*

	Judges' ratings of physical attractiveness of date		
	Ugly	Average	Attractive
1 Percentages of subjects saying they wanted to date partner again			
According to ugly males	11	53	80
According to average males	30	50	78
According to attractive males	04	37	58
According to ugly females	53	56	92
According to average females	35	69	71
According to attractive females	27	27	68
2 Percentages of subjects actually asking date out			
According to ugly males	16	21	40
According to average males	12	25	22
According to attractive males	00	26	29
3 Mean number of subsequent dates the couples actually had			
Ugly males	09	1.23	73
Average males	30	94	17
Attractive males	00	2.08	53
4 How much subjects say they liked their dates			
According to ugly males	06 <sup>a</sup>	5	90
According to average males	-10	58	156
According to attractive males	-62	16	82
According to ugly females	03	71	96
According to average females	-10	61	150
According to attractive females	-15	21	89
5 How much subjects say they think their date likes them			
Guesses by ugly males	17 <sup>b</sup>	52	43
Guesses by average males	55	64	65
Guesses by attractive males	7	53	58
Guesses by ugly females	41	41	35
Guesses by average females	38	58	55
Guesses by attractive females	65	65	61
6 Numbers of subjects in each category			
Ugly males	(32)	(43)	(30)
Average males	(43)	(36)	(11)
Attractive males	(26)	(38)	(38)

<sup>a</sup> The higher the positive number, the more the subjects said they liked their dates. The higher the negative number, the more the date was disliked.

<sup>b</sup> The higher the number, the more the subjects thought their dates liked them.



tive dates than with average-appearing ones, who in turn were more desired than ugly ones, a finding that is consistent with common sense. Figures reported in Section 2 of Table 3-1 are from follow-up surveys, which showed that male students were more inclined to ask average and attractive girls for subsequent dates, and Section 3 shows that average girls were more likely to accept the proffered invitations. The reactions of attractive men to their dates, as indicated by their desires to date their partners again and their actual behavior, reveals a considerable degree of "choosiness." Ugly males (Section 3) were actually more successful in getting dates from attractive women than were men in other categories, but Section 2 shows that they made more attempts than other men to secure dates from this group of women.

Some rather interesting incidental findings are reported in Sections 4 and 5 of the Table. Ugly males tended to overrate the impression they were making on ugly or attractive females, whereas ugly females made the poorest over-all impression and were inclined to show the greatest degree of overrating. Average males and females were fairly realistic with respect to their acceptance by ugly or average partners, but were inclined to overrate the impression they made on attractive partners. Attractive males and females consistently underrated the impression they were making.

As far as social attraction is concerned, the major findings of this research is that physical attractiveness was the *only* really significant variable. None of the other measures—intelligence, self-acceptance, extroversion, etc.—were found to have any relationship to liking or subsequent dating (Walster, Aronson, Abrahams, & Rottman, 1966).

It can be argued, of course, that the kind of dating situation contrived by the researchers is highly artificial. In real life, people do not pair off at random but are likely to have some expectations about the kind of dating partner

who will please them. It is possible, too, that different people might have different kinds of expectations. This possibility was explored by Robert H. Coombs and William F. Kenkel (1966) in another computer dating study, in which partners were actually matched according to their hopes and expectations. The questionnaire, that the participants filled out before they were paired, showed that men were much more interested in the physical attractiveness of their partner, whereas women were more concerned with getting a partner who had high status, intelligence, and was of the same race and religion. Women tended to set higher standards than the men, and also were less likely to be satisfied with their date. Actually, the matching added very little to their satisfaction. When asked how much they would enjoy further dates with their computer partner, 39% of the men and 26% of the girls said, "A great deal" or "Quite a bit." This compares with approximately 50% of the men and 56% of the women who said they wanted to date their partners again in the University of Minnesota study we described, in which partners were paired randomly.

### *Attraction Resulting from Similarity*

Research dealing with physical appearance tends to be somewhat inconclusive as an explanation of social attraction. Perhaps the most that can be said in respect to this attribute is that the cultural or subcultural group of which one is a member defines certain standards of appearance that take on a certain normative value. The closer a person approaches this normative standard in his appearance the more attractive he becomes to those who use the norm as a basis for their judgments. Physical appearance is, however, only one basis for

social attraction. Studies with a number of different variables show that shared similarities may be equally important. Successful candidates for the American presidency have tended to be taller than the national average and also taller than unsuccessful candidates. These observations would tend to support a physical attractiveness theory of social attraction, but similarity may also be a factor. When male pedestrians were queried just before the 1969 mayoral election in New York City, taller respondents favored the six-feet-two Lindsay over the five-feet-six Procaccino by a ratio of three to one, whereas shorter respondents were equally divided between Lindsay and Procaccino. Even when ethnic differences that might affect the height of the respondent were controlled, shorter subjects still were more likely to express a preference for Procaccino (Berkowitz, Nebel, & Reitman, 1971). Apparently both physical attractiveness and similarity are determinants of social attraction.

It seems reasonable to expect, too, that, attractive as winners in a tennis tournament might be, the losers would be more likely to seek the company of other losers rather than that of the individuals who defeated them. It is well known that "misery loves company," but, as Stanley Schachter (1959) puts it, "misery does not love just any kind of company, it loves only miserable company." The fact that an individual has undergone disappointment may lead him to perceive similarities between himself and others who have had a similar experience. If so, he is likely to be attracted to them and to recognize them as a potential source of sympathy.

### *Similarity in attitudes as a basis for attraction*

In recent years, much research has been done on measuring the relationship between attractiveness and shared similarities in attitudes and

values. Theodore M. Newcomb (1956, 1961, 1963) has played a leading role in such research, and has used it as a way of testing a general theory of interpersonal attraction dealing with the attempts of individuals, involved in interpersonal situations, to develop affectional relationships that are harmonious or, as Newcomb puts it, "symmetrical." Newcomb's theory of symmetry is discussed in the chapter devoted to theories of consonance and balance, but, for the present, we are concerned specifically with his findings with respect to social attraction.

Newcomb studied the acquaintanceship process in two sets of seventeen male university students who lived together in a house provided by the experimenter for a sixteen-week period. The students had all been strangers before the study. Acquaintanceship patterns were studied by asking students each week to fill out questionnaires revealing friendship choices and attitudes. Newcomb found that roommates tended to be attracted to each other from the first, irrespective of similarity in attitudes and values, but as the weeks wore on, and residents of the house got to know one another, mutual liking grew stronger among individuals with similar attitudes and beliefs. This liking was especially strong when two students shared similar attitudes about other members of the group. Attitudes toward oneself were also crucial: an individual tended to be attracted to members whose attitudes toward him were similar to those he held about himself.

In another type of study, subjects listened to a tape recording of a problem posed by a hypothetical, emotionally disturbed individual. At the end of the recording, they were asked to determine which of two alternative courses the individual should choose. After they had made their selection, they heard what sounded like another subject who was also selecting one of the alternatives. What they actually heard



Drawing by Stan  
Hunt; © 1971  
The New Yorker  
Magazine, Inc.

*"Did you ever notice how like attracts like?"*

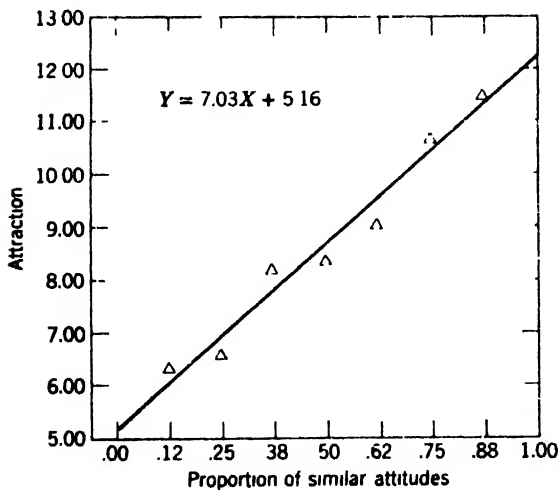
was one of a pair of recordings that had been programmed by the experimenter in such a way that half the subjects heard a statement that agreed with the choice they had made and the other half heard a statement that disagreed. Subjects were then asked what they thought of the person whose choice they had heard. Results showed that subjects were more inclined to be attracted to the individual whose choice agreed with theirs (Worchel & McCormick, 1963).

Some research by Donn Byrne and William

Griffitt (1966) has also produced results consistent with the foregoing studies. Byrne and Griffitt asked elementary and secondary school students to fill out brief questionnaires dealing with topics in which children their age are likely to be interested. Each student was later given a similar questionnaire which presumably had been filled out by another student of the same sex, but which had actually been filled out by the experimenters in such a way that the percentage of agreement with the student's own questionnaire could be controlled. They were

then asked to indicate the extent to which they thought they would like the other person, and their willingness to accept him (or her) as a work partner. Both of these replies were taken as an index of the degree to which the student would be attracted to the fictitious individual. The experimenters varied the amount of similarity over the full range from complete agreement to no agreement at all. As Figure 3-1 shows, there was almost a straight-line relationship between the amount of similarity and the extent to which they felt attracted to the fictitious individuals.

The triangular points on the graph represent the mean of the attractiveness scores for students who rated a fictitious stranger whose questionnaire contained the indicated proportion of responses that were similar to their own. Students who rated a stranger who was only 12% similar to them, for example, gave him



**Figure 3-1.** Degree of attraction expressed by elementary and secondary students toward a fictitious stranger, represented in terms of a linear function of the proportion of attitudes similar to theirs as stated by him. (Byrne & Griffitt, 1966. Reproduced by permission. Copyright © 1966 by the American Psychological Association.)

an attractiveness score of about 6.3. The line represents the smoothed out relationship suggested by the seven scores. The formula is the algebraic formula for a line with the indicated slope.

In general, the older students tended to be more selective than the younger ones. Younger students were about 20% more accepting of highly similar strangers than of dissimilar ones, but older students were 37% more accepting of similar strangers. One explanation is that as children become older and more experienced, they become more aware of the bases for making friends, and they find association with individuals who hold similar views more satisfying than association with those holding dissimilar ones. As a child develops in his ability to formulate and to express his opinions, beliefs, values, and attitudes, he finds that individuals who hold similar views are likely to be supportive and positively reinforcing, whereas those who think differently are likely to be critical and negatively reinforcing. As a result of these experiences, we come to expect satisfaction and support from those whose views are similar to our own and dissatisfaction and disagreement from those whose views are different.

This theory of explaining social attraction has had considerable research support. One of the several studies testing the universality of the relationship between similarity and interpersonal attraction expressed in Figure 3-1 was an experiment by Byrne, Baskett, and Hodges (1971), in which subjects encountered two other students (actually confederates of the experimenters), one of whom expressed agreement with 22 out of 24 statements made by the subject, and the other of whom expressed disagreement with 22 out of 24 statements. When subjects were asked to indicate on an evaluation scale their liking for the two "students," the agreeer got a mean score of 11.48 and the disagreeer got a mean score of 6.87.

Similar results were obtained in a second experiment, conducted along somewhat similar lines.

The experimenters also sought to obtain behavioral confirmation of the ratings. In the first experiment, the experimenter asked the three students (the subject and the two confederates) to go into an adjoining room for a "debriefing" session on the experiment. Six chairs had been placed in a shallow semicircle, and the confederates sat in the second and fourth chairs, respectively. It was hypothesized that subjects would prefer to sit near the similar confederate and would sit at some distance from the dissimilar one. The hypothesis was confirmed for female subjects, who chose the similar confederate 80% of the time, but disconfirmed for male subjects, who sat near the dissimilar confederate 60% of the time. A review of the research literature showed that these results should have been predicted, for other studies showed that women tend to sit *next* to liked individuals, whereas males prefer to sit *across* from those they like.

The second experiment therefore made use of a seating arrangement in which there were four chairs around a small table. The two confederates sat at the far sides of the table, diagonally across from each other. Following the leads from the research literature, it was hypothesized that women subjects would sit next to the similar confederate and across from the dissimilar one, whereas men subjects would sit next to the dissimilar confederate and across from the similar one. Results showed that male subjects performed as expected to a significant degree—72% of the time—whereas the behavior of female subjects was only 52% consistent with the hypothesis, a degree that was not significant. Hence, the results, in terms of social behavior, only partially confirmed the hypothesis.

### *Attractiveness versus similarity*

It is obvious that the physical attractiveness and the attitudinal similarity explanations of attrac-

tion are quite dissimilar and lead one to make somewhat different predictions. The study by Walster et al. (1966) that we described earlier would seem to disconfirm similarity theory, which presumably would lead one to expect that male students would have been most inclined to date, subsequent to the experiment, women at their own level of attractiveness. As a review of Table 3-1 shows, similarity of attractiveness had little effect, if any. One possible explanation of this apparent disconfirmation is that physical attractiveness is not an attitude and hence lies outside the predictive scope of similarity theory. Another explanation is that the situation does not reflect the natural selection process that goes on in real-life dating.

One study of college dating practices suggests that similarity (of status, at least) is a factor in dating. Ira L. Reiss (1965) surveyed dating practices of members of high- and low-status fraternities and found, as Table 3-2 shows, that male members of high-ranking groups were much more likely to have "serious" dating partners who were members of high-ranking sororities, than of low-ranking sororities. Only 14% of the members of low-ranking fraternities had dating partners from high-ranking sororities. They were slightly more inclined to select partners from low-ranking sororities, but otherwise chose their partners from sources outside. The results were less clear-cut for sorority members, who were inclined to select a high proportion of their dates from nonfraternity sources. Nevertheless, high-ranking sorority members were three times more likely to have dating partners from high-ranking fraternities than were low-ranking sorority members, and five-and-one-half times more likely to date high-ranking than low-ranking fraternity members.

Byrne Ervin, and Lamberth (1970) have also investigated the relative importance of physical attractiveness and attitude similarity in a study in which students of each sex were paired on the basis of similarity in their responses to a

Table 3-2. *Status and Membership of Serious Dating Partners of Members of High- and Low- Ranking Fraternities and Sororities ("Greeks") (Reiss, 1965)*

Status of group	Percentage of each type of partner			
	High-ranking "Greeks"	Low-ranking "Greeks"	Independent group members	Off- campus residents
High ranking fraternity members	63	12	8	17
Low ranking fraternity members	14	19	44	23
High-ranking sorority members	44	8	0	48
Low-ranking sorority members	15	21	19	45

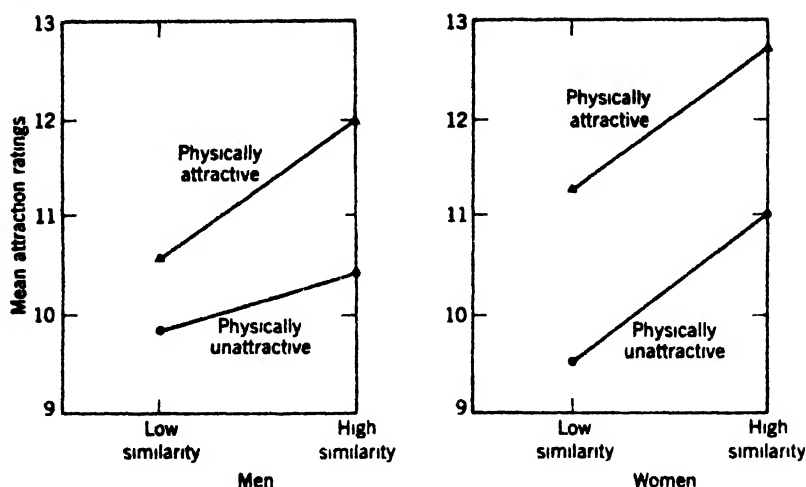
questionnaire. It was thus possible to conduct an experiment with 24 high-similar pairs (66 to 74% agreement) and 20 low-similar pairs (24 to 40% agreement). The pairs of subjects met in the experimenter's office, where they were given 50 cents and told to spend a half hour on a "coke date" at the student union. During this half hour, they were to learn as much about each other as possible. After the date, they returned to the experimenter's office for further instructions. At this time, the experimenter unobtrusively noted the distance between the two as they stood at his desk, while he gave them instructions about the reaction sheet they were to fill out.

One of the items on the reaction sheet was a rating scale, which each student used to rate the physical attractiveness of his or her partner. Another item asked the student to indicate the degree to which he or she was attracted to the partner. An analysis of these ratings showed that both physical attractiveness and similarity were significant factors in the attraction the pairs of subjects expressed for each other, as Figure 3-2 shows. The subjects' ratings of each other's attractiveness was also correlated  $-.42$ , on the average, with the distance separating them as they stood before the experimenter's desk. In other words, the higher they rated each other's physical attractiveness, the less the distance between them. What is particularly inter-

esting, however, is that the correlation between couple's attitude similarity and their physical distance was even higher ( $-.49$ ). The finding is particularly significant, because it shows that the degree of similarity that pairs of individuals are able to perceive in the course of a half-hour interview is reflected in their later behavior in a social situation. Not only do "likes attract likes," but the amount of physical proximity they prefer can be predicted from their responses to questionnaires.

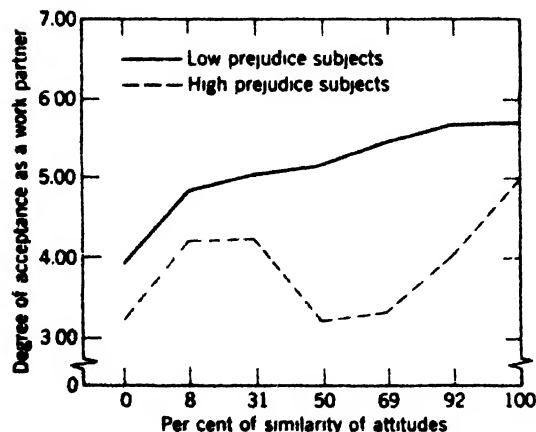
### *Similarity and race prejudice*

The relationship between attitude similarity and race prejudice was studied by an experiment in which subjects rating high or low in prejudice filled out an attitude scale similar to those used in the studies described above. The experimenter then filled out a scale for each member of the group, which he presented to them some time later, saying that the questionnaire represented the responses of a Negro stranger whom they were to rate as a possible work partner. As in the previous study, questionnaires had been filled out in such a way as to present varying amounts of agreement with their own questionnaires, ranging from 0 to 100%. Figure 3-3 shows there was an increase in the attractiveness of the fictitious stranger, depending on the extent to which his



**Figure 3-2.** Mean attraction ratings given by students to their relatively attractive or unattractive dates, whose attitudes were similar or dissimilar to theirs (Byrne, Ervin, & Lamberth, 1970).

attitudes were in agreement with those previously expressed by the subjects. This relationship was almost a straight-line function for the less-prejudiced subjects. It is important to note that even the highly prejudiced students



**Figure 3-3.** The relationship between similarity of attitudes and willingness to accept a Negro stranger as a work partner, as expressed by subjects of high or low prejudice (Byrne & McGraw, 1964).

found the Negro stranger more attractive as a work partner when his opinions agreed with theirs (Byrne & McGraw, 1964). In still another study, conducted along the same lines, white segregationists reported themselves as more attracted to Negro segregationists than they were to white integrationists (Byrne & Wong, 1962).

The idea that similarity (or assumed similarity) of attitudes and values is more important than race in determining prejudice has been confirmed by more recent research studies. Hendrick, Bixenstine, and Hawkins (1971) had white subjects look at filmed interviews in which black or white actors agreed or disagreed with the subjects' previously expressed views on a controversial topic. The subjects were then asked a series of questions that indicated the extent to which they liked, and were attracted to, the actor they had seen. Results showed that subjects were attracted primarily on the basis of similarity of views, and racial differences or similarities had little effect.

In another study, a black or a white male ex-

perimeter approached pedestrian subjects near a supermarket and asked them for change for a dime. The experimenters were dressed either conventionally or unconventionally. The white experimenter, when unconventional, wore long hair and was dressed in hippie garb, while the black experimenter, when unconventional, was dressed in "Afro" garb and hairdo. As Table 3-3 shows, when the experimenters were conventionally dressed, both black and white subjects behaved similarly toward the black experimenter (about 70% cooperation), and similarly (almost 80% cooperation) toward the white. In the "deviant condition," however, when the experimenters were unconventionally dressed, an interesting effect occurred: both black and white subjects lowered their cooperation with the white experimenter to 60%, and white subjects cooperated even less with the black experimenter. Black subjects, however, actually *increased* their cooperation to over 80%.

The investigators explained the behavior of the white subjects in terms of the latter's assuming that conventionally dressed experimenters of either race held beliefs and values similar to theirs, whereas unconventionally dressed ones did not. In other words, they "responded to deviance as a negative attribute without

regard to the deviant's race" [p. 358]. Deviance apparently led "the observer to infer differences from himself in terms of health and sanitation habits, sexual behavior, and drug usage" [p. 358]. The black deviant was evidently seen in a special way by black subjects, a finding that "may indicate that the black community does not find the inferred values of the apparent black nationalist incongruent with their own" [p. 358]. The investigators concluded that their findings were consistent with research (e.g., Rokeach & Mezer, 1968), showing that differences in belief are more important determinants of discrimination than differences in race (Raymond & Unger, 1971).

### *Making friends and acquaintances*

The research on similarity of attitudes and values makes it clear that we are more attracted to people whose views resemble ours than to those whose views do not. One might argue that if stimulation and arousal are the bases for social attraction, we ought to be attracted to those whose views differ. There is, however, the question of how much stimulation is enough. Interacting with similar others is more arousing than not interacting with anyone, but

*Table 3-3. Percentage of Pedestrian Subjects Cooperating with Black or White Experimenters, Conventionally or Unconventionally Attired, Who Asked Them to Change a Dime (Raymond & Unger, 1971)*

Dress & race of experimenter	White subjects (N=581)	Black subjects (N=207)
Conventional		
Black	72	70
White	82	80
Unconventional (deviant)		
Black	54	81
White	60	60



interacting with different others is even more arousing, perhaps beyond the limits of comfort, if carried on too long—a matter of common knowledge for those who have lived abroad and in isolation from their own cultural group. Interacting with similar others is not only stimulating, but is also reassuring. Holding similar views means that one does not have to explain or defend everything one says; getting agreement also has a reinforcing effect. With such reinforcement, one is tempted to say more. Conversation is the social cement that keeps friendships going.

These statements make sense theoretically, as well as from the standpoint of common sense, but research evidence to support them is rather sparse, so far. For example, the question of whether friends actually are similar has been explored by a number of researchers, with somewhat equivocal results. Carroll E. Izard (1960) found that personality test patterns of mutual friends were more similar than those of randomly selected pairs. In a later study, however, Izard (1963) was able to find such similarity among friends who were college freshmen, but not among seniors. Howard M. Rosenfeld and Jay Jackson (1965) studied the friendship patterns of women white-collar workers in two large offices and found that mutual friends who had been employed a year or less were indeed similar with respect to scores on personality tests, but those who had been employed longer than a year were similar in one office but not in the other.

In an analytical review of research dealing with social relations, Daniel R. Miller (1963) noted that similarity alone is not a basis for mutual liking. Generally speaking, strength in a dimension of behavior is more conducive to attraction than is a deficit. He notes, for example, that people are more likely to get together if they are skilled artists than if they lack artistic ability. Miller identifies four subtypes of the kind of similarity likely to lead to mutual attrac-

tion: similarity of personality, similarity of traits that facilitate endeavors leading to a common goal, similarity in the ability of individuals to gratify the same needs in each other, and the possession of mutually-valued, emotional commodities. As an example of the latter, Miller cites a study by P. T. Beisser and others (1953) of disorganized families in which ineffectual, detached individuals were drawn together because the ineffectuality of one spouse did not threaten the detachment of the other.

### *Complementarity as a Basis for Attraction*

Much of the research on attraction through similarity confirms the old saying, "Birds of a feather flock together." There is, however, another saying that goes, "Politics make strange bedfellows." The two sayings do not exactly contradict each other, because the first says that likes attract, and the second says that expediency often forces unlikes to work together. The second saying also finds its equivalent in a psychological theory of attraction: the complementarity hypothesis. This explanation of attraction is expressed in the work of Robert F. Winch (1958), who proposed that members of dyads (two-person groups) are attracted to each other, not because their particular patterns of needs are similar, but because they are different, although in complementary ways. In other words, an individual who rates high in trait A and low in trait B, is attracted to an individual who is low in trait A and high in trait B, and vice versa. Winch found some support for this proposition in a study of the psychological needs and emotional traits of twenty-five married couples. A statistical analysis of scores made on psychological measures showed that assertive individuals tended to marry receptive ones, and vice versa, and that dominant individuals tended to marry submissive ones.

Similar complementary patterns were found for other traits.

Other attempts to validate Winch's proposal have generally failed to find much in the way of supporting evidence. For example, Thomas J. Banta and Mavis Hetherington (1963) found more similarity than complementarity among mutually attracted persons. They administered the questionnaire measuring psychological needs (the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule) to twenty-nine groups of six subjects each, each group consisting of an engaged couple and a male and a female friend of each fiancé. The engaged couples were similar on eight out of the fifteen needs measured by the questionnaire. The female friendship pairs were also similar to each other, the male pairs, less so, although even in the latter instance there was little evidence of complementarity.

In spite of this negative evidence, however, everyday observation will turn up any number of instances in which two or more individuals are mutually attracted because they find matching strengths and weaknesses in each other. An engaging conversationalist and a taciturn individual may become good friends. The conversationalist needs an audience, and the taciturn person needs to be entertained. A tax lawyer and an accountant develop a good working relationship; each has skills that the other lacks, and they are more effective working together than they would be separately. The problem is that these are rather specific instances, and it is difficult to develop and test general theories for special cases.

The main body of research dealing with interpersonal attraction does, as has been pointed out, support the idea that individuals are attracted to those similar to them, and that a perceived similarity tends to attract. To return to some ideas proposed in the last chapter, it would appear that the perception of similarities in another person aids in the process of identity, in that the traits one perceives in oneself

are reaffirmed when they are perceived in another. Interpersonal similarities also facilitate social interaction, as we noted earlier, but also because they can serve as the basis for communication, empathy, the development of group norms, and cultural patterns of behavior.

### *Attraction Resulting from Frequent Exposure*

The sociologist George C. Homans (1950) writes: "If the frequency of interaction between two or more persons increases, the degree of their liking for one another will increase, and vice versa." The "vice versa" portion of this statement is especially consistent with common sense: the more we like people, the more we will try to find opportunities to see them. However, we ordinarily tend to be somewhat less aware of the validity of Homans' main proposition: namely, that merely seeing people frequently results in our finding them attractive. As a matter of fact, some common sayings contradict this principle: "Familiarity breeds contempt," and, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder," but then the latter is contradicted by the saying, "Out of sight, out of mind."

### *Housing studies*

The validity of Homans' statement can be tested by observing the behavior of people who are brought together by chance and determining whom they find attractive. In the previously cited study by Newcomb, students who were roommates tended to express preferences for each other from the very start of their stay in the house. A somewhat earlier study that also illustrates Homans' point was conducted by Festinger, Schachter, and Back (1950) shortly after World War II, when young veterans and their families were housed in "veterans' housing" at colleges and universities throughout the

United States. One such housing area was a complex of seventeen buildings arranged around a court, each building consisting of ten apartments, five to a floor. The researchers observed and charted spontaneous group formation among the families and found that propinquity (of residence) was the major factor in determining who became friends with whom. "Functional distance" was more important than actual physical distance between apartments. People who used the same stairs and the same utility rooms were more likely to socialize with one another and become friends than were persons who lived in another apartment house or even in another part of the same house. The usage of common areas resulted in their seeing one another more often and thus meant that they were functionally closer than they were to other residents, even those who lived next to them, but whom they saw less often because they used a different entrance.

William H. Whyte, Jr. (1956) studied the social notes appearing in a newspaper published in a suburban area near Chicago and noted the families who participated together in various social gatherings. He found that the overwhelming percentage of coparticipants were neighbors, particularly those who lived next door to one another or across the street. Families whose children played together also were drawn into interaction by that fact—not through any initiative of their own.

Another study showing the effect of propinquity consisted of a survey conducted by Robert F. Priest and Jack Sawyer (1965) of attraction patterns in a new, 320-man dormitory at a university. They found that students were more likely to choose their friends from those who lived near them, although being members of the same class in college (peership) was also an important factor. The longer the students lived in the dormitory, however, the less important propinquity became, and they made an increasing number of friendships with

students living at some distance from the dormitory.

Gary A. Yoshioka and Robert Athanasiou (1971) also conducted an interview survey of residents of a 427-unit housing project and got results that were consistent with the other studies we have reported. They found that it apparently takes about three months for a new resident to become acquainted, for the recent arrivals reported more friends living at a major distance than did those who had been living there for some time. After a residence period of two years or more, however, the distance to friends increased, suggesting that propinquity had become less of a factor in friendship. As might be expected, respondents with children tended to have friends (presumably the parents of their children's playmates) who lived close by. Socioeconomic factors had an effect also on friendship, with individuals having professional status or in the higher-income brackets reporting greater distance to friends' houses. Either individuals with higher status are more selective, or they have to go further to find friends who share their attitudes and values. Another interesting finding was that respondents who agreed with the statement, "White people have a right to keep Negroes out of their neighborhoods if they want to," tended to live further from their friends than those who disagreed. The researchers noted that inasmuch as the proportion of residents who agreed with the statement was small, it is quite likely that they would have to travel a relatively long distance to find friends who shared such views.

In sum, it appears that propinquity plays a major role in interpersonal attraction, partly because it provides more opportunity to interact, and partly because it gives people something in common—that is, they feel a degree of similarity because they share the same residence area and probably have quite similar homes. In all the studies cited, the

groups were quite homogeneous in age, education, economic standing, and interests. This gave them a kind of "built-in" similarity that made it easier for them to find topics of common interest and frames of reference than it would have been had their background been more heterogeneous.

### *The positive effects of mere exposure*

In attraction, it is the frequency of exposure that makes the difference, according to Homan, an explanation that in itself takes no account of similarity of views. Familiarity, in other words, does not breed contempt, but liking.

The hypothesis that stimuli generally come to be valued more positively with increased exposure has been proposed by Robert B. Zajonc (1968), who was interested in the relationship between the abundance of certain objects or stimuli in the environment and our valuing of them. Common sense would hold that roses, for example, are abundant because people like them and, as a consequence, grow them. Zajonc noted, however, that "it can also be argued that people like roses because there are so many roses growing" [p. 13]. He fortified this contention by reporting his findings that the correlation between the preference that subjects express for letters in the alphabet and the frequency of the letters' appearance in written language is  $+ .84$ .

Zajonc also conducted a number of experiments in which he exposed nonsense words to subjects at various levels of frequency. Whichever nonsense words were given frequent exposure were rated higher in "goodness of meaning," whereas words seen only a few times were rated lower. Similar results were obtained with Chinese ideograms, as Figure 3-4 shows, and also with pairs of human faces. Zajonc agreed that novel stimuli are often preferred over familiar stimuli, but argued that the fact that they are preferred doesn't mean that

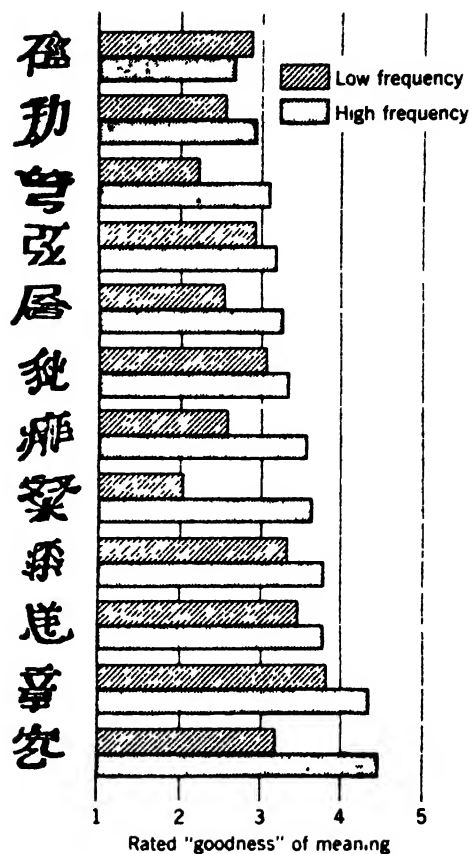


Figure 3-4. The "goodness of meaning" of various Chinese ideograms with relationship to the frequency of exposure, as rated by subjects who had no previous acquaintanceship with the Chinese language. (Zajonc, 1968. Reprinted by permission. Copyright © 1968 by the American Psychological Association.)

they are liked, because we have a natural tendency to tend to orient toward the unfamiliar in search of information.

Zajonc supported his contentions further by asking subjects to rate a list of 154 antonyms (e.g., *better-worse*) on their desirability. He got more than 90% agreement on the desirability of 115 of the pairs; the lowest agreement was

51% (for *mortal-immortal*) In the vast majority of instances, the preferred word was also the one appearing in ordinary usage with the greatest frequency, according to the Thorndike-Lorge (1944) word count *Advance*, for example, was preferred by 99% of the subjects over *retreat* *Advance* has a frequency rating of 452 on the Thorndike-Lorge list, whereas *retreat* has only 105.<sup>1</sup>

The relationship did not hold for all antonym pairs, however. For instance, 99% of his subjects agreed that *peace* (frequency 472) was more desirable than *war* (frequency 1118), and that *victory* (frequency 118) was better than *defeat* (frequency 166). These deviances could be explained in terms of the higher information content of the least-favored halves of the antonym pairs. Such negative relationships between desirability and frequency were the exception and constituted only 18% of the total of 154 antonym pairs. Readers who are interested in testing the relationship between the desirability and frequency of words should rank the following list from 1 (most desirable) to 10 (least desirable):

— Physicist	— Chemist
— Botanist	— Sociologist
— Psychologist	— Geologist
— Economist	— Geographer
— Biologist	— Astronomer

The frequencies with which these words appear in everyday English are listed at the end of this chapter, before the summary.

<sup>1</sup>In the light of recent interest in women's rights, it is intriguing to learn that Zajonc's subjects showed 63% agreement in rating *men* as more favorable than *women*—a comparison that coincided with Thorndike-Lorge ratings of 3614 and 2552 for the two words. Similarly, they agreed (59%) that *man* (frequency 7355) was more desirable than *woman* (frequency 2341). Zajonc did not, however, report the sex ratio in the 100 college students who served as his subjects.

Zajonc's contentions did not go unchallenged. Salvatore R. Maddi (1968) criticized them on the grounds that familiarity is only one factor in the value ascribed to a word. He also cited research showing that the reactions to unfamiliar stimuli are at first characterized by avoidance, then by approach and interest and finally by indifference. Leon A. Jakobovits (1968) agreed that frequency and value of words tend to be positively correlated, but attributed the relationship to the fact that people structure their world in a fashion consonant with their need system [p. 51] whereupon this tendency becomes reflected in their speech. In other words, the frequency with which given words appear in language can be explained only in terms of the motivation of the people who utter language. People who shape their own environment are not expressive pawns.

Zajonc's propositions have also generated a number of research studies which tend to confirm what might be expected from common-sense reasoning. Brickman and others (1972) obtained results suggesting that repeated exposure of a stimulus leads to increasing favorable ratings only if it is initially neutral or positive. The Chinese program study of Sagert and Jellison (1970) that we described in Chapter 2, also reported results that were consistent with this idea. As Figure 2-5 showed, subjects liked complex ideograms more than simple ones right from the beginning. With continued exposures, their liking for complex ideograms continued to increase, whereas their liking for simple ones increased somewhat and then declined.

In general, research seems to support Maddi's idea that with familiarity, avoidance yields to attractiveness which eventually fades into apathy. Such results, when extrapolated and applied to interpersonal relations, seem explicable in terms of arousal theory. Using the Yerkes-Dodson curve (Figure 2-3) as a schema,

it would appear that initial encounters with new people are highly arousing and interfere with one's social performance, to use Erving Goffman's (1959) term. Hence, initially we find ourselves over on the right-hand side of the Yerkes-Dodson curve and our reaction is one of avoidance. With repeated encounters, however, the new people become somewhat more predictable, and one is less anxious. Although the anxiety level has been lowered, the arousal level is fairly high, which places us at the top of the curve, where our performance, social or otherwise, is at its maximum. We know just enough about the new people to be comfortable with them, but there is enough that is unknown to make them interesting. Over an extended period of time, however, they become highly predictable and present us with few surprises. We move over to the left-hand side of the curve, are less careful with our social performances (perhaps engendering some hurt feelings thereby), and start looking for new people to start the acquaintanceship cycle with.

The data produced by the survey of Yoshioka and Athanasiou (1971) are consistent with this line of reasoning. New arrivals in the housing project had more friends elsewhere than in the project itself. At this stage, they and their neighbors were eyeing each other in a cautious, tentative fashion. During a three-month "probationary period," caution was reduced, mutual interests were discovered, and the acquaintanceship process was well underway. After a couple of years or so, however, arrivals and neighbors had mined each others' lodes of information to their mutual satisfaction, interest began to lag, and acquaintances were sought elsewhere.

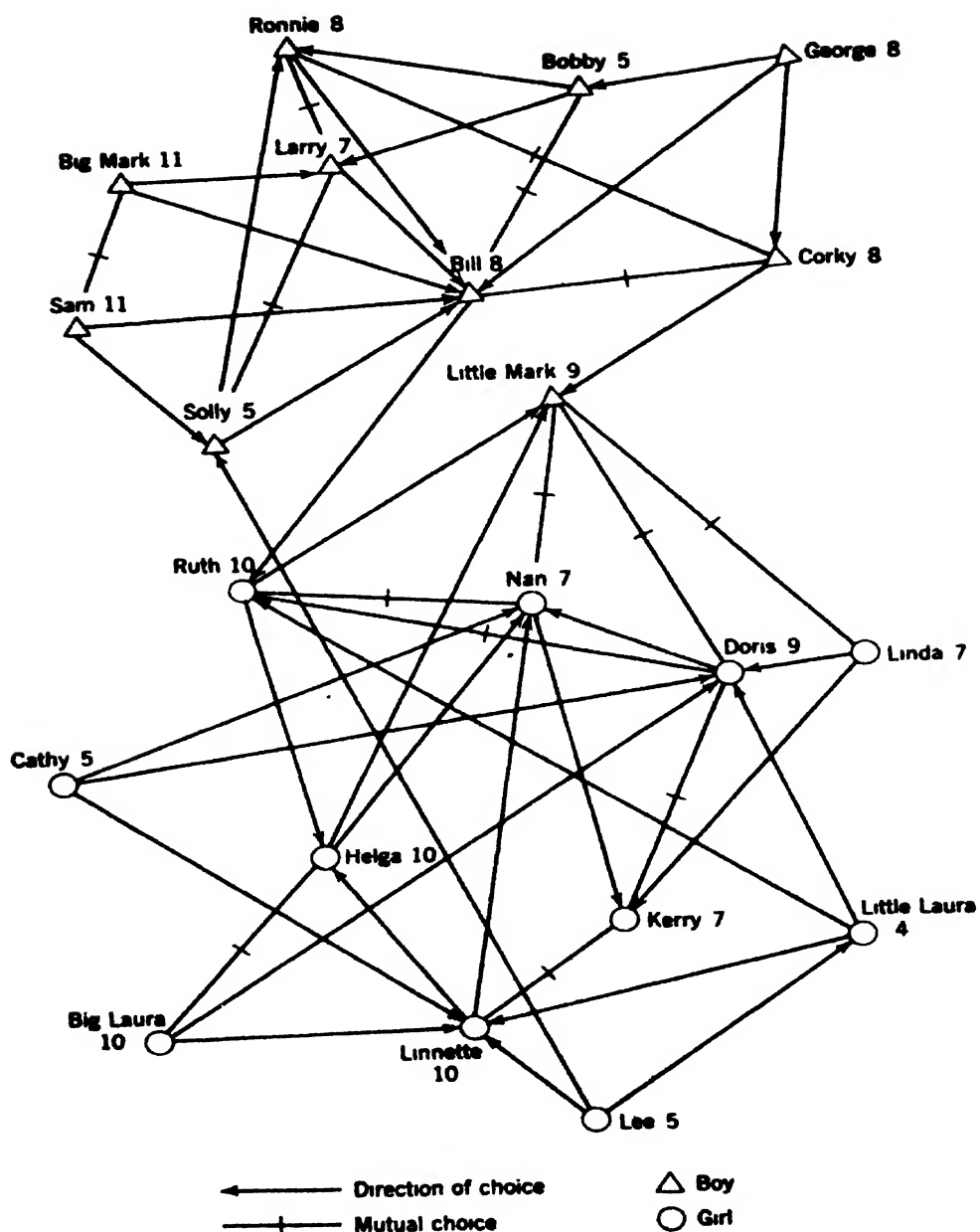
There are other ways of explaining the acquaintanceship cycle, of course. For instance, one could say that immediately after we move into an area, we become preoccupied with problems related to settling down, and devote a major part of our interests and energies to

that task. Once these problems are resolved, however, we look for other activities in which to invest our energies, and this search leads to acquaintanceships among our neighbors. Such an explanation does not contradict the exposure-arousal hypothesis, but supplements it.

### *Sociometry: The Measurement of Attraction*

The simplest and most obvious way of measuring interpersonal attraction in a group is that of asking each member whom he likes or dislikes. Such a direct question is usually rather "threatening," however, and psychologists are more likely to ask who are preferred as working partners, as companions in recreational activities, and the like. The number of times each group member is chosen by others is an index to his attractiveness. Similarly, each individual can be rated in terms of the extent to which he is disliked or ignored. This approach to gathering interpersonal data was termed *sociometry* by its developer, J. L. Moreno (1953). It has been used extensively in studying the social structure of work groups, play groups, and classrooms, as well as for measuring the interpersonal attractiveness of individual group members.

Sociometric data can be reported in terms of the number of choices (or rejections) received by a given group member, or they can serve as the basis for a diagram, or *sociogram*, like Figure 3-5. Sociograms have the added advantage of providing the observer with a bird's-eye view of a group's social structure, and at the same time indicating the degree of social attraction possessed by members of the group. Figure 3-3 shows the choices made by children in a play group who were asked to name the three children in the neighborhood they would most like to play with. This group is highly



**Figure 3-5.** Sociogram of a neighborhood play group. Numbers refer to ages of children (Holmes, 1963).

cohesive, all the more remarkably so because of the considerable age span between the oldest and the youngest. There is a tendency for the older members in the group to choose one another, but there are a number of mutual choices that span several years of age. The fact that there are no exclusive cliques (caused by a few members choosing one another and no one else) is an indication of cohesiveness, easy interaction, and mutual acceptance. Although there is a tendency for choices to run along sex lines, there is enough crossing of the line to suggest that relationships among the children are generally positive. Nan, Linette, and Doris are the *stars of attraction* among the girls. They are the *natural leaders* in their group. Larry and Bill are the leaders among the boys, with Little Mark filling a status position for girls. The two *isolates* among the girls, Cathy and Lee, are only five years of age, which may account in part for their not being chosen. Little Laura, aged four, also comes close to being an isolate, being chosen only by Lee, another and very young isolate. Age seems to be less important in attraction among boys in this neighborhood, because both five-year-olds have two choices each, and the only isolate, George, is eight.

J. G. Jenkins (1948) used sociometric methods to evaluate the morale of naval air squadrons during World War II. Squadron A, which had high morale, had no cliques, and only two of its officers expressed negative feelings toward group members. Furthermore, the commanding officer and the executive officer were the two best-liked members in the group. Squadron B, which had poor morale, presented quite a different picture. There were six cliques of four officers each, and only three of the remaining nine officers expressed any positive regard for each other. All officers in Squadron B expressed negative feelings about one or more of their colleagues, and nine officers said that they disliked the executive officer.

C. Joan Early (1968) used sociometric

methods in an ingenious study in which she used classical conditioning to manipulate interpersonal attraction in elementary school children. She first conducted a sociometric survey of two classes of fourth- and fifth-grade pupils and identified the *isolates*. All children then were given the task of memorizing lists of paired words. Half of each pair consisted of the name of a child in the class and the other half consisted of a word that the children had previously rated as positive or neutral. The names of some of the isolates were paired with positive words; the other isolates' names were paired with neutral words. During the days following the performance of the memory task, observers noted the interactions between the isolates and their classmates. Results showed that those isolates whose names had been paired with positive words were approached more frequently than those in the control group, whose names had been paired with neutral words. The isolated children previously tended to be unresponsive to others. During free play at recess they did very little; if they spoke at all, it was to children smaller and younger than themselves. After the experimental treatment, however, the isolates in the experimental group showed more animation, spoke to their peers oftener, and engaged in more active play. Early explains this change in terms of classmates' beginning to offer themselves as reinforcers for more outgoing social behavior on the part of the isolates.

What Early did with her experimental treatment is a reversal of the usual acquaintanceship process, in which our positive attitudes follow pleasant interactions. In Early's experiment, positive attitudes preceded pleasant interactions, showing that the sequence can be reversed.

The major changes observed by Early were in playground interactions. There were some increases in the sociometric scores of the experimental isolates, but the number of chil-



dren involved was small and the results were not statistically significant. In the fourth grade, however, the high-popular members of the class did significantly increase their acceptance of the former isolates, thus showing some responsiveness to the changes that had taken place in attitudes and the interaction pattern in the class.

Sociometric methods are also used in social psychological research and were employed in a number of the studies cited in this chapter. They can also be used to measure any personal dimension on which group members may have an opinion: leadership potential, tendencies to be disruptive, personal warmth, ambition, dominance, political liberalism-conservatism. Indeed, any personality factor that is related to interpersonal attraction can be measured sociometrically.

## *Summary*

Although research confirms the common-sense idea that physical appearance plays an important role in social attraction, other factors are also important, the most notable being interpersonal similarity in attitudes and values. The effect of such similarity on attraction can be demonstrated by such behavioral measures as the distance separating pairs of individuals as they stand together. Some studies have shown that similarity of opinions can, to some degree,

even counteract avoidance tendencies as expressed in the form of race prejudice. Whenever we encounter strangers, we are likely to use their appearance as a basis for making assumptions about their attitudes and values. These assumptions then serve as the basis for decisions to approach or avoid strangers.

Research findings are somewhat equivocal on the extent to which similarity functions in friendships. But the opposite hypothesis, complementarity—the idea that people are attracted because of differences in their needs and emotional traits—also lacks firm support. Although people may be attracted to one another because of complementarity in needs and traits, a survey of the full range of evidence shows that similarity is probably a more significant factor than complementarity.

The accessibility of others, propinquity, is also an important factor in acquaintanceship patterns, and many friendships develop merely because people happen to see one another frequently. This phenomenon can be explained in part because repeated exposure to a stimulus tends to increase its acceptability. This effect has been demonstrated experimentally by displaying words, ideograms, and other types of stimuli to subjects at various frequencies of exposure. With repeated exposure, acceptability tends to increase at first; but as exposure continues, the stimulus tends to become less attractive. A similar curvilinear relationship has been observed in the acquaintanceship process.

Frequencies with which the ten words on page 66 appear in English usage are (Zajonc, 1968):

Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency
1. Psychologist	36	6. Geologist	9
2. Chemist	32	7. Physicist	8
3. Economist	32	8. Geographer	7
4. Sociologist	14	9. Botanist	6
5. Astronomer	12	10. Biologist	5

The measurement of social attraction is termed *sociometry*, and diagrams or social maps showing interpersonal preference patterns in groups are called *sociograms*. Sociometric measurements can be used in experiments and other studies in which factors affecting the

interpersonal acceptance are manipulated. They can also be used to measure group characteristics, such as cohesiveness and morale, or individual characteristics, such as leadership, aggressiveness, and political liberalism-conservatism.



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Nancy Palmer  
Photo Agency*

# Chapter 4

## Learning in Social Contexts

Learning is a term used by psychologists to designate relatively permanent changes in an organism's behavior that result from its experience. The term can also refer to the processes within the organism involved in producing such a change. Changes due to maturation, sensory adaptation, injury, surgery, drugs, fatigue, or disease are, of course, specifically excluded from this definition.

Chapters 2 and 3 discussed the overriding, general tendency of man to associate with others in order to ensure his own survival and to seek stimulation, meaning, identity, and definition. In the language of learning theorists, associating with others can be considered as a goal, and success in attaining this goal serves to reinforce behavior that is oriented toward being with others. Those people who are able to reward us through their willingness to attend

to us or interact socially with us are thus in a position to be selective about the kind of behavior they wish to reinforce, and we, in turn, will find ways to secure and hold their attention. In this chapter we are concerned with some of the ways in which others may reward us, and what effect such rewards have on our behavior. Whereas Chapters 2 and 3 were largely concerned with why and how we are attracted to others, this chapter deals with social learning—the process that is set in motion because of this association.

### *Others' attention as a reinforcer*

One of the ways in which others can reward us is by attending to us. Getting the attention of another person has an arousal effect on us and is generally experienced as rewarding. Being ignored is generally nonrewarding, depressing, or, at times, even disturbing. There are many specific exceptions to this generalization, of course, e.g., the unprepared pupil who hopes that the teacher will call on another. But the principle still holds as a general rule.

If attention is rewarding, one would predict that individuals who are trying to bring about changes in the behavior of others would succeed if they gave them more attention than if they gave them no more than the routine amount. This prediction has been confirmed by the research of Ellis Batten Page (1958), who conducted an experiment concerned with behavioral changes of high school and junior high school students taking quizzes under normal classroom conditions. Page asked seventy-four randomly selected teachers to give one of three kinds of treatment to whatever objective examination they were using in their classes at the time of the experiment. After the teachers had scored the examination papers, they were asked to divide the papers randomly into three groups. One group was returned to the students without written comment, and with only the score and the letter grade. A second group

received comments that were standardized as to the grade received. For example, all "C" papers received the comment, "Perhaps try to do still better?" The remaining third of the papers received the "free comment" treatment, in which teachers were asked to write whatever they deemed appropriate on the papers. The three treatments thus represented three levels of attention, ranging from the "no comment" treatment, representing the least amount of attention, to the "free comment" treatment which represented the greatest amount of attention.

Grades on the very next examination given by the teachers to the same students were used as a dependent variable, that is, as a measure of the effect of the three kinds of treatment on student behavior. Results showed that students whose papers had been given the "free comment" treatment (maximum attention) scored significantly higher on the second examination. Students whose papers had received the "standardized comment" (moderate amount of attention) showed some gain, but not as much as those whose papers had received the "free comment" treatment. Those students who were in the "no comment" (no attention) group showed no gain at all.

It is interesting to note that the teachers had no idea of how influential their comments would be. When Page asked them, before the experiment began, to predict the effect their comments would have on the performance of students, they said that better students would respond favorably, but that poorer students would be inclined to do the opposite of the teachers' recommendations. The results showed, however, that those who received the most attention, in the form of free comments on their papers, improved irrespective of whether they are "A" or "F" students.

Page's research demonstrates two things: that attention has reward value, and that changes in behavior can be brought about as a function of the extent to which attention is

increased. It can be said, of course, that Page's study represents a special case: after all, it *did* take place within the context of a classroom, where students are *supposed* to respond favorably to the efforts of teachers to get them to improve. It can also be argued that the attention received from an authority figure, like a teacher, has a greater impact than the attention received from peers.

Let us therefore turn to a second study, one which was undertaken in a setting less obviously oriented to academic improvement and in which changes in behavior were induced by persons who were not authority figures. Allen D. Calvin (1962) asked the students of his psychology class at a women's college to play the role of experimenters and to compliment all girls wearing blue during the lunch hour in the college dining hall. The day before the complimenting began, 25% of the girls were wearing blue. After five days of compliments, the percentage wearing blue rose to 37%. When the special treatment stopped, the percentage dropped to 27%. The experimenters then switched to praising girls wearing red. An average of 12% of the student body wore red during the days prior to the special treatment, but during the period of the experiment, the percentage increased to 22% and leveled off to 18%.

Both Page's study and Calvin's study show that individuals can be induced to change their behavior (learn) when they become the object of favorable attention on the part of another person. Still other research shows that similar effects obtain when the reward comes from a group, rather than another individual. William Abbott Scott (1957) conducted an experiment in which pairs of subjects participated in debates about issues on which they had previously committed themselves: universal military training, university policies regarding night check-in time for women's residence halls, and de-emphasis of football at the university. Each debater was required to speak against the posi-

tion he had already expressed. After the debates were concluded, the experimenter went through the motions of polling the audience to determine who had won the debate. In actuality, subjects were assigned to the "winner" or the "loser" category on a random basis. After the results of the "balloting" were announced, debaters were asked how they now stood on the issues. Results showed that "winners" were much more likely to report a change in their opinions, and "losers" were more likely to maintain their previous position. Expressions of opinion that were "accepted" by the audience (i.e., that resulted in "winning") had evidently become more attractive to the subjects, and this, in turn, led to changes in their behavior. In other words, they *learned* a different point of view on the issues.

If attention and approval have any positive value for the individual, it should follow that withdrawing or withholding them should have negative value. There is a suggestion of this in the studies we have reviewed in this chapter. The students in Page's study who received no special attention did not improve; the girls in Calvin's experiment reduced their wearing of blue or red when they were no longer complimented; and the debaters reaffirmed their original point of view when they were declared "losers."

### *Increasing responsiveness to attention*

It should follow that persons who have not been the objects of attention for some time—deprived of attention—would be more responsive than those who have had considerable attention—satiated with attention. One study designed to test this possibility used first-grade boys as subjects. At this age, adult attention has even more impact than it does during later years of development when the individual normally has other sources of satisfaction. Subjects involved in this study underwent two kinds of treatment before they entered the

room in which the experiment trials were to take place. The socially "satiated" group were first told by their teacher that they would be playing a "fun" game in which no one could fail or do poorly. The experimenter was introduced to the class in a pleasant and warm manner, and as he took each child to the experimental room, he chatted with him, addressed him by name, and inquired after his interests. Subjects in the socially "deprived" group got no attention. The teacher simply asked the child to "Go with this man," when the experimenter appeared in the classroom. On the way to the experimental room, the experimenter conversed with the child only when necessary, and then briefly.

The dependent variable in this study was performance at a learning task. Each subject was seated before a box that had a right and a left switch lever and was told that he was to press one of them every time a buzzer sounded. "Right" and "wrong" responses to the signal were programmed in such a way that 70% of the time a left response was correct, whereas a right response was correct 30% of the time. Thus the subject's best chance of being correct was through pressing the left lever each time the buzzer sounded. In the experimental situation, two methods were used to inform subjects of the correctness of their response. In the "social reinforcement" condition, the experimenter would say "Good" or "Fine," whenever the subject made a correct response, whereas in the "nonsocial reinforcement" condition, a red light would come on to indicate a correct response. Thus there were four possible combinations of treatment: socially satiated subjects could be socially or nonsocially reinforced, and socially deprived subjects could be socially or nonsocially reinforced. Figure 4-1 presents the results. All groups increased the percentage of left responses during the 150 trials, but subjects who had not received special attention prior to the learning trials (socially deprived)

were more responsive to the learning situation than were the socially satiated subjects. This advantage held true, however, only when the experimenter reported their success to them personally (social reinforcement) (Dowart et al., 1965). It was as though their appetite or readiness for social approval had been built up by the brief period of social deprivation (about three minutes) they had undergone prior to the learning trials. Inasmuch as the approval of the experimenter was more important to them than it was to the satiated group, they worked harder to get it and learned more efficiently and effectively.

### Reinforcement and learning

The term *reinforcement*, as used in the Dowart et al. study, as well as in other contexts so far in this book, is one that a number of psychologists, notably B. F. Skinner, prefer instead of *reward* when discussing learning. The argument against the use of the term *reward* is that it implies too much. In the studies reported so

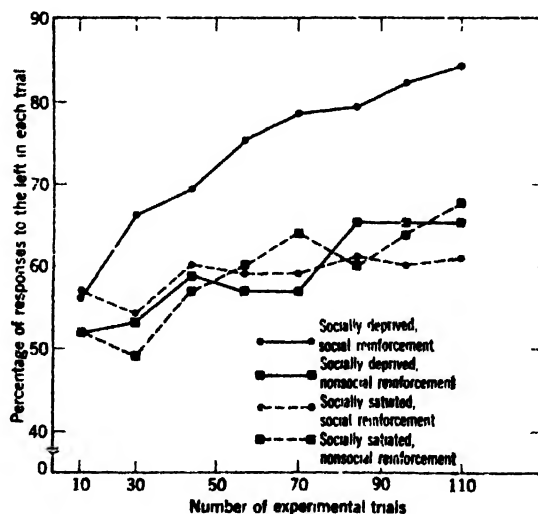


Figure 4-1. The effect of social reinforcement and nonsocial reinforcement on socially deprived and socially satiated subjects (Dowart, et al., 1965).

far in this chapter, the reinforcing event would ordinarily seem to have reward value for the learner, in that expressions of approval are generally considered to be pleasant and welcome. Not all rewarding events are reinforcing, however. In the study just cited, being told "Good" or "Fine" by the experimenter was much more reinforcing for the socially deprived group, but was no better as a reinforcer than a flashing light for the socially satiated group. Furthermore, the comments written on papers by teachers in the study by Page were not all in the nature of praise and yet they facilitated learning.

Reinforcement is the central idea in the concept of learning proposed by B. F. Skinner (1963) of Harvard University, a leading figure in research dealing with operant or instrumental conditioning. One of the attractive features of his approach is its simplicity, as revealed by his explanation of how reinforcement affects learning.

"By arranging a reinforcing consequence, we increase the rate at which a response occurs; by eliminating the consequence, we decrease the rate. These are the processes of operant conditioning and extinction."

To apply these principles to the study by Calvin (1962), compliments directed at girls wearing blue came as a consequence of wearing blue. The wearing of blue was thus reinforced. When the compliments stopped, the rate of wearing blue dropped off. The processes of operant learning or conditioning were reversed, and an extinction of the learned response took place.

### *Social learning through imitation*

Although principles of operant learning have proved to be very useful in the psychological laboratory, they fall short when it comes to explaining many, if not most, changes in the

behavior that appear outside the laboratory. Albert Bandura and Richard H. Walters (1953) acknowledge the validity of operant theory in explaining the appearance of behavior that is already in the repertory of the learner, but state that it fails to explain adequately the appearance of *novel* behavior, behavior that the learner has never before displayed. Skinner (1953) explains the appearance of new responses in terms of "shaping," or the reinforcement of *successive approximations* of the new behavior. In the laboratory, pigeons can be taught to play table tennis or guide military missiles, provided the experimenter reinforces any behavior that is in any way related to the behavior he eventually wants performed. As Bandura and Walters point out, however, very little social behavior would ever be learned if we had to depend on someone going through the detailed, demanding, and tedious process of conditioning successive approximations to the desired behavior. The process used by the higher animals, and particularly by man, is *imitation*. Through observing and imitating the behavior of others, learners can bypass much wasteful random behavior and come close to reproducing the behavior desired. The learning of language is a good example. Young children learn to express themselves in words and sentences not so much because adults reinforce certain sounds that are embedded in infant gurgles, but rather generally through a process of imitating the speech of others.

Bandura and Walters have a similar criticism to make of Julian B. Rotter's (1954) social-learning theory. Rotter said that the probability of the occurrence of any behavior in a particular situation depends on two factors: (a) the individual's expectancy that the behavior will be reinforced, and (b) the value the individual attaches to the reinforcer. This theory, according to Bandura and Walters, cannot explain responses the individual has never emitted. For example, a child who does not know Polish is



unable to utter a Polish sentence even if he knows that the probability for reward is 100% and the reward is something he wants very much. The missing ingredient, of course, is the model.

Bandura (1971) maintains that reinforcement theorists assume that the subject's imitative responses have to be reinforced if learning is to take place. Figure 4-2 illustrates how reinforcement theorists perceive modeling: the model's behavior becomes a stimulus ( $S_M$ ) that evokes a response ( $R$ ) on the part of the learner, which is followed by a rewarding stimulus ( $S_{Re}$ ). The rewarding stimulus then

do. His research shows that children watching sequences of activity on television screens displayed the same amount of imitative learning, irrespective of whether they had been informed in advance that correct imitations would be rewarded (Bandura, Grusec, & Menlove, 1966).

In another study, Bandura and McDonald (1963) investigated the effect of imitation with and without reinforcement of the learner. The experiment used several pairs of brief stories of a type used by Jean Piaget (1948) in his research with the development of moral judgment in children. Piaget has found that children

#### Reinforcement Theories

$S_M \longrightarrow R \longrightarrow S_{Re}$

#### Bandura's Social-Learning Theory

Anticipated  $S_{Re}$   $\longrightarrow$  Attentive State  $\longrightarrow S_M \longrightarrow$  Processing:  
Symbolic coding  $\longrightarrow R$   
Cognitive Organization  
Rehearsal

Figure 4-2. Comparison of reinforcement theories of social learning and Bandura's social-learning theory (after Bandura, 1971).

reinforces the response to be learned. Bandura's social-learning theory, however, holds that the modeling process is more complex than that. As the second sequence in Figure 4-2 shows, the learner must first attend to the model's behavior ( $S_M$ ), usually because he anticipates the possibility of reinforcement ( $S_{Re}$ ). The resulting stimuli are then processed by the learner through symbolic coding, cognitive organization (thinking, analyzing), and rehearsal, either mentally or in fact. The result is the learned response ( $R$ ).

In Bandura's theory, anticipated reinforcement is considered to be a *facilitative* rather than necessary condition, because there are other factors than response consequences (i.e., reinforcement) that influence what individuals

go through at least two easily recognizable developmental stages in their attitudes toward misbehavior. In the earlier stage, which Piaget calls the stage of "objective responsibility," children are inclined to evaluate misbehavior or mishaps in terms of the gross amount of damage done, without reference to the intentions of the individual involved. In the later stage, which he calls the stage of "subjective responsibility," children evaluate behavior in terms of the individual's intent, rather than its material consequences. Thus when someone tells them two stories, one in which a boy accidentally breaks fifteen cups that were on a tray located unseen on the opposite side of a door he was opening on the way to dinner, and the other in which a boy breaks one cup in the

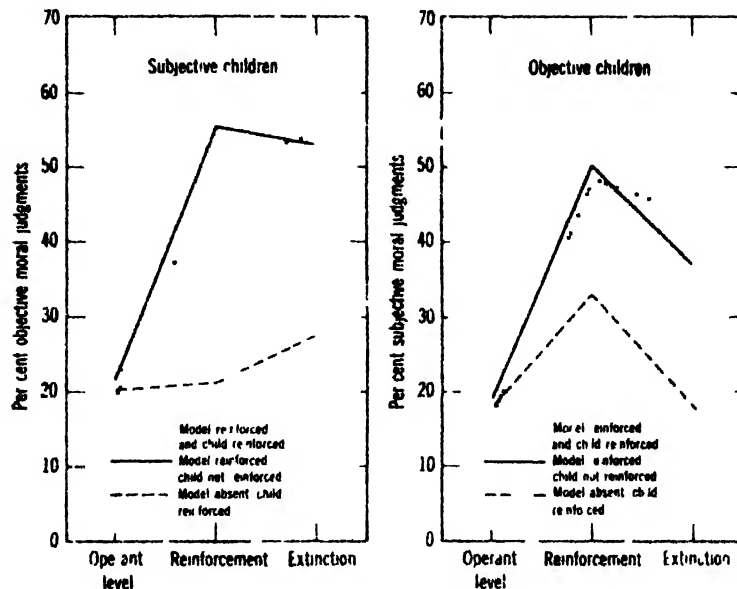
course of robbing the cookie jar, children who are still in the stage of objective responsibility will say that the boy who broke fifteen cups did the naughtier thing, whereas children whose development has reached the stage of subjective responsibility will say that the boy who broke the single cup in pursuit of the illicit cookies was the more culpable.

Bandura and McDonald tested a group of children between the ages of 5 and 11 on pairs of stories like those used by Piaget and divided them into two groups, one consisting of children more likely to make moral judgments along the lines of objective responsibility, and the other consisting of those more likely to make judgments characterized by subjective responsibility. These two groups were further subdivided to form six groups, each of which was treated differently in the experiment that followed. Twelve pairs of stories like the one described were read to all the children, one child at a time. In one treatment, the stories were read to the child in the presence of an adult model, who was asked to give his (or her) judgment before the child was asked. The model had been instructed to make judgments contrary to the kind the child had made in an initial testing situation. The model's judgments were reinforced by the experimenter's saying "Very good," "That's fine," or "That's good," and when the child gave similar responses, he, too, was reinforced. The second treatment was like the first, except that the model was reinforced but the child was not. No model was present in the treatment received by the third group, but the child was reinforced for giving responses contrary to the type he had given in the initial testing session. In all treatments, the experimenters attempted, either through reinforcement, or by reinforcing a model, or both, to get the child to make judgments that were in the opposite direction to those he had made in the initial testing session. After the experimental treatment, the child was given

another set of similar pairs of stories and asked to make judgments without a model being present and without reinforcement. The experiment thus enabled the researchers to determine whether reinforcement or modeling is a more important force in inducing learning.

The results, as shown in Figure 4-3, show conclusively that the behavior of the model was a more powerful influence in the behavior of children than was the reinforcement they received. As a matter of fact, reinforcement proved to be a negligible factor, as is indicated by the lack of any significant difference in the performance of the children in the model-present condition who were reinforced and those who were not. There was relatively less change in the behavior of children who did not have a model and who were reinforced only and, in the case of children who had originally given objective judgments, there was no permanent effect, for after the reinforcing session was over, they reverted to their original position.

The impact of the model's behavior on the children can be explained partly in terms of the fact that they were able to "identify" with him, that is, the children were able to perceive a relationship or degree of similarity between themselves and him. The experimental situation is, after all, a relatively artificial and unfamiliar one to the children. They are, in effect, "put on the spot" and asked to give their opinions about the moral aspects of two examples of misbehavior. Perhaps the fact that the stories are about children who are misbehaving or are in trouble is enough to arouse anxieties. In any event, the forthright statement of the model who is then reinforced by the experimenter provides the child with an anchoring point of security in this ambiguous situation, thus making it easy for the child to claim some degree of identity with him by imitating his reply. Indeed, Bandura and Walters (1963) state that there is really no difference between



*Figure 4.3 The effect of models responses and reinforcement on children's moral judgment (Zajonc 1966 after Bandura & McDonald 1963 Reproduced by permission)*

imitation and identification. They maintain that the fact that one person observes and imitates another is evidence that he identifies with him.

It can also be argued that imitation is a special case of reinforcement, in that the person who successfully imitates can be said to be self-reinforcing. Such a formulation does not simplify the problem for the psychological researcher who wishes to study the effects of reinforcement on behavior, because results of research are much more clear-cut if reinforcement is controlled by the experimenter. If the decision as to what is reinforcing is left in the hands of the subject, the experimenter can never be sure what is producing the effects he is observing, because individuals vary widely in their perceptions of what is reinforcing. No doubt techniques will eventually be developed to control this source of variability, but, at present, it is difficult to determine the relative extent to which reinforcement and imitation operate to shape human behavior. It hardly

seems likely that all the variations in human behavior can be accounted for by the chance appearance of reinforcing agents, hence, imitation seems a very plausible explanation, particularly for behavior that appears after infancy.

Rotter's social-learning theory, which we mentioned above, does seem to have some advantages in explaining imitation. For one thing, studies have shown that children are more likely to imitate role models who are acceptable to them (Flanders & Thistlethwaite, 1970) or who they know are in a better position to reward them (Grusec & Mischel, 1966). Rotter also conducted further research involving the use of models in various situations, the results of which suggest that models serve the function of aiding children in defining situations (Henker & Rotter, 1968). A similar effect appears to apply to adults as well. D. H. Meichenbaum (1971) conducted an experiment with women undergraduates who had expressed extreme, unrealistic fears of harmless

snakes. They then watched three televised models approaching and handling a 5-foot corn snake. Some of the subjects saw models who had no hesitation in approaching and handling the snake; others saw models who were initially fearful, but who overcame their fear and were able to pick up the snake. In a subsequent encounter with the snake, subjects, who had seen the models overcoming their fears, were the ones more likely to follow through and handle the snake. In other words, the models who were coping with their fears appeared to be defining the situation as it was experienced by the subjects themselves. As a consequence, the subjects were more likely to identify with these models and to imitate them.

Learning that takes place in a great many life situations occurs without our being reinforced by anyone other than ourselves. Indeed, as Bandura (1971) points out, "self-evaluative and self-reinforcing functions assume a prominent role in social learning theory" [p. 30]. We have all had the experience of reacting to ourselves as though we were another person observing our own behavior, criticizing and praising where appropriate. This is another example of learning through symbolic interaction, as G. H. Mead has termed it.

### *Early reinforcement*

Social learning is the basis of identity: we learn to become the persons we are. This process begins very early. During his first few months, the infant learns to perform those actions that bring physical satisfaction in the form of warmth, a full stomach, contact with soft-textured materials, an empty bladder, and so forth. Some of this learning is simple and reflexive, but not all of it. Consider the matter of sleeping. Adults sometimes forget that being put to bed is a form of social isolation. Beforehand, the infant has been the object of attention for an extended period: he has been

cuddled, talked to, played with, fed, and diapered. Then suddenly he is put into a dark room. Many a child complains about this treatment and does so bitterly. Parents in our culture rather characteristically try to ignore the child's crying for several minutes and then begin to worry about whether something is wrong with him. Perhaps he has gas on his stomach; perhaps his diaper needs changing. And so they go in to investigate. The crying stops during the period of attention, but begins again once the parent is out of the room.

What the parent unwittingly has done is to reinforce the crying, say the learning theorists. They point out, furthermore, that much of our child care operates to reinforce obstreperous, noisy, demanding behavior, and consequently extinguishes quiet, happy, constructive behavior. Inasmuch as attention is a reinforcer, and we have shown that it is a powerful one, we are in the position of reinforcing misbehavior rather than positive behavior. What parents should do, they say, is to pay attention to a child when he is engaging in the kind of behavior of which they approve and to ignore him when he misbehaves. Most parents, however, for practical reasons or otherwise, are unable to administer schedules of reinforcement that require them to ignore crying babies. Perhaps the solution would be to have the baby's crib in the family room so that he would not be put to bed when the family is still up and around, but such a solution would be out of place in a culture that requires that children have a bedtime and that it be enforced, and in which parents are inclined to value and look forward to "some time to themselves."

### *Culturally determined expectations*

Some of the variability in human behavior can be accounted for by differences in the biological make-up of infants—some are energetic, some passive, some hypersensitive and queru-

lous, some wakeful, and some always sleepy. Families begin to modify this behavior from the very beginning. For one thing, they have certain expectations for children which are derived from the culture, as filtered through their more personalized views of the world in general and infants in particular. Clyde Kluckhohn (1949) reported that certain proportions of white and Zuñi babies born at a New Mexico hospital could be classified as unusually active, average, or quiet. When the same children were observed two years later, the white babies who were unusually active still displayed a high degree of restlessness, but the Zuñi babies who were unusually active at birth were much more subdued. Such a baby may have been more active than other Zuñi children his age, but he was markedly less active than the white children who were hyperactive at birth. The reason for the difference may be found in the different ways of life that characterize the cultures of Anglo-Americans and Zuñis. Whereas vigorosity and forthright self-expressiveness are valued, imitated, and reinforced in the dominant middle-class Anglo-American culture, Zuñis tend to be mild-mannered, relaxed, and nonaggressive. Their disapproval of people who show initiative and drive runs so high that in former times such people were branded as witches and hung up by their thumbs (Benedict, 1934). As Kluckhohn says, "culture channels biological processes." Culture does not replace or eliminate a biologically determined behavior pattern, such as hyperactivity, but it shapes it, puts its stamp on it, and attempts to make it compatible and consistent with the values and norms of the society into which the child is born.

Kluckhohn's observations regarding the activity level of Anglo-American children have, incidentally, been corroborated more recently by a study comparing the reactions of junior high school children in Austin, Texas, with a comparable group in Mexico City. When asked

what their probable response would be to a number of different situations, children in the United States were much more likely to select active alternatives, whereas Mexican children were more likely to select passive alternatives (Hereford, Selz, Stenning, & Natalicio, 1967).

Much of what is called "national character" consists of patterns of behavior that are learned during the formative years of childhood, when parental expectations have the maximum effect on children's behavior, first through direct reinforcement of behavior parents believe is appropriate, and later through imitation, when children adopt parental expectations as their own. We shall have more to say about this process when we discuss the effect of culture on behavior, but are introducing the idea here because the acquisition of culturally determined behavior is an example of social learning.

### *Values and expectations*

It is important to note that parents are often not immediately aware of the kinds of expectations they are expressing in their treatment of children. In fact, there is often a gap or a disparity between the parents' "official position" (the culturally determined values they subscribe to publicly) and the kind of social behavior they display. This type of disparity occurs when people try to live in accordance with a number of different sets of values, and is characteristic of cultures that are in periods of change. Pluralistic cultures, like ours, which are made up of values and attitudes that immigrants have brought with them from their parent cultures, are likely to create problems because they create situations in which conflicting ideologies exist side by side. The ideas that boys should be boisterous and aggressive, and that they should not disturb or annoy others, are examples of two sets of mutually inconsistent values that exist side by side in our culture.

As a result of such conflicts in values, parents

may say one thing and do another. Rajput mothers in Khalapur, India, claim that they praise their children when they do things that meet with parental approval. The observation of anthropologists disconfirms this self-image, however, because the mothers actually seldom praise their children and instead use adverse methods of control: scolding, cursing, threatening, and the like. Incidentally, one threat commonly used by mothers is that of telling children that Americans will come and give them injections, take them away, beat them, or even eat them (Minturn & Hitchcock, 1963).

Parallel examples of disparity between public statements and private actions are not difficult to find in other cultures. Although American mothers and fathers would heatedly deny that they are interested in encouraging their adolescent children to engage in sexual intercourse, the fact that they actively encourage dating when children are barely into puberty, tolerate kissing and hugging, and condone "going steady" would suggest to any detached, objective observer that the parents may be working at cross purposes to their official position. Indeed, some behavioral scientists believe that increases in heterosexual activity among teenagers in recent years may be attributed in part to corresponding increases in parental permissiveness, which, in turn, reflect changing cultural norms and values (Bandura & Walters, 1963). This is another example of how biologically determined behavior can be shaped by cultural influences. In some primitive cultures, children are expected to engage in heterosexual activity quite early, but the general pattern in industrialized cultures is for them to postpone such behavior. As a result, parents in the primitive cultures in question believe that the sex drive appears very early, but parents in industrialized cultures believe that it does not occur until middle or late adolescence. Just to be on the safe side, however, secondary school authorities in a great many countries segregate

students by sex beginning with the pubertal years, the schools in the United States and Canada being notable exceptions.

The existence of mutually incompatible systems of values may create problems for children who are striving to learn appropriate patterns of behavior. It is confusing when parents and other authority figures state that adolescents should under no circumstances engage in sexual intercourse, backing up their position with severe penalties, and at the same time permit, encourage, and actually arrange social affairs in such a way that both sexes spend a great deal of time together, much of it alone. When sexual intercourse does occur, as it often does, there is a sense of outrage on the part of adults and of guilt on the part of the participants. Everyone is distressed and confused. One of the things learned, therefore, is that sexual relations are distressing and confusing, outrageous and guilt-producing: a natural outcome when people are trying to subscribe to two sets of values and are strongly committed to both.

The situation with respect to sex is further complicated by the fact that the mass media present an image of sex that is associated with fun and games. Children and teenagers thus have three sets of values to sort out: (a) Judeo-Christian attitudes condemning premarital or extramarital sex; (b) the parental idea that it is permissible, if not desirable, for teenagers (and even "preteens") to date and to "go steady"; and (c) the values of the mass media, which maintain that premarital or extramarital sex is fun and that everyone is doing it.

### *The choice of models*

There are sets of models available for each of these points of view. The first group consists of most middle-class parents, teachers, clergymen, and other authority figures; the second is composed of teenagers who take advantage

of parental permissiveness, are sexually active, and encourage their adventurous peers to do likewise; and the third is made up of people in the entertainment world whose real adventures are broadcast in the public press, and whose fictional adventures form the content of film and television romances. Adults today spend much time speculating why so many teenagers prefer and often imitate the second and third types of model. The answer seems to be that these models are the individuals whose behavior is setting the trend of the times, the emerging norms and values of our pluralistic culture. They are, furthermore, somewhat younger, livelier, and more visible than the first group of models, and teenagers find it easier to identify with them.

### *Reference groups*

These models also constitute what is termed a *reference group* for a great many teenagers. Reference groups are "... groups to which an individual relates himself or aspires to relate himself as a part psychologically..." (Sherif, 1963). Reference groups may serve as sources of attitudes and values, which are imitated and which serve as bases for further social learning. In effect, persons making use of reference groups *refer* to the attitudes and behavior of such groups in determining their own attitudes and behavior. As Bandura (1971) points out, we tend to control our own behavior through standards of self-evaluation and self-reinforcement that, in turn, are influenced by the real or anticipated reactions of admired or respected members of reference groups.

An individual does not have to be a member of a reference group in order to be influenced by it. Popular musicians are reference groups for many teenagers who are not themselves musicians and never will be. On the other hand, the group of which the teenager is actually a member may also be a reference group for him

in the sense that he uses it as a basis for learning attitudes and patterns of behavior. Inasmuch as we reveal "who we are" by our attitudes and behavior, the reference groups which we use as models help us learn our identity.

Parents serve as reference groups for children under ordinary circumstances, particularly during the years when children are first beginning to imitate. As the child approaches school age, he begins to identify with and imitate other reference groups, some of them rather remote, like television cowboys of the Old West or comic strip characters, but others quite real, like kindergarten teachers or older brothers.

### *Reference groups and complexity of behavior*

Children's behavior becomes increasingly complex and varied with each year of development. The highest degree of similarity and the least variability is to be found in the behavior of infants. Although there are differences in temperament and activity, as noted earlier, newborn infants are more similar at this stage of development than they are at any future time. They all require a great deal of sleep, they can ingest only soft foods, they have no inhibitory control over the evacuation of body wastes, and so forth. As they begin to develop and acquire new behaviors, however, variations begin to appear. Jimmy, who was born at the same time as Johnny, began to smile at three weeks of age, but Johnny did not smile until he was over a month old. On the other hand, Johnny learned to crawl a month sooner than Jimmy did. At one year of age, Jimmy could say three or four words, but Johnny was still making baby sounds. At one year of age, there are many more differences between Jimmy and Johnny than there were at birth. As their behavior is being shaped by two different sets of parents and as they come to imitate some of the behavior of their parents, they will develop still

more differences. By the time they are in school, the number of differences is still further increased by the fact that each refers his behavior to a different set of reference groups. Jimmy goes to mass every Sunday, and his chief ambition is to be an altar boy. His father is a plumber and is also active in the local Democratic organization. Jimmy likes to sit in the corner of the kitchen after supper and listen to his father talk politics with his friends. Johnny's reference groups include Superbatman, a television character; a group of older boys who spend all their spare time sailing; and two older brothers who are amateur scientists. By the time Jimmy and Johnny are teenagers, the number of different reference groups with which they identify, and from which they learn, will be further increased, thus promoting even additional differences in their behavior.

As children become adolescents and adults in a complex, urbanized, and industrialized society like ours, the number of reference groups that are available continues to increase. The more reference groups that figure in an individual's life, the more complex his behavior will become, and this complexity furnishes a further basis for behavioral differences.

If we are to map out a useful scheme for understanding an individual's social learning, we must determine what reference groups he is using, what importance he attaches to each of them, and what he is learning from them. A person obviously cannot imitate all the behavior of even one reference group; he must select out certain characteristics or aspects of the great range that the group presents. Presumably he will select aspects that are more central than others, but this does not always hold true. A teenager who uses folk musicians as his reference group may not even try to imitate their most central characteristic—playing guitars and singing folk songs—but instead may imitate their dress. This, for him, symbolizes the group. A teenager whose reference

is a gang of motorcyclists is also a member of the group. Central to this group is owning and riding a motorcycle. This he does, but he also copies the dress, mannerisms, attitudes, and values of the group.

Attitudes and values may be the most psychologically significant things that are learned from a reference group, because they serve as the basis for a vast complex of social behaviors. Like the other kinds of individual differences we have discussed, values and attitudes are learned, that is, we learn to value or prefer one type of event, course of action, or object over the others that are possible or available to us. Because values and attitudes are such an important part of social behavior, the following chapter is devoted to a discussion of this topic.

### *Perceptual factors in social learning*

Attitudes and values are determined by how people perceive, which, in turn, tends to be determined by preexisting patterns of attitudes and values. There is a circular, mutually reinforcing relationship between attitudes and values, on the one hand, and perceptual styles on the other. We learn as children what is important and what is to be ignored, and this learning forms one of the bases for the structure of attitudes and values that will develop. The Japanese child learns to be intolerant of dirt on his person, but to be tolerant of it in public places. Dirt that comes in contact with the skin is perceived as a kind of threat, but dirt and clutter that accumulate in railroad stations and in the streets are likely to be overlooked. The Japanese child is also likely to learn the values inherent in a fairly authoritarian social structure which stresses differences in status and even incorporates them into the grammar of the language. These values lead him to perceive relations between himself and others in terms of sharply stratified positions,



and his perception of the behavior of others tends to confirm the validity of these values.

The American child also learns a value system that reflects a degree of social stratification, together with appropriate grammatical forms of address—very formal, moderately formal, and familiar. However, this value system is in conflict with another set of cultural values that stress personal equality as a social virtue. As a consequence, social differences are likely to be blurred and somewhat confused for American children. A three-year-old American child is, for example, more likely to use the first-name form of address in speaking to an adult than is a European or an Oriental child. Although some American adults will correct a child who uses this form of address, a great many of them will tolerate it. The fact that the adult continues to treat the child in an accepting way may reinforce the child's belief that the social distance between him and the adult is small or that it is of little importance. As a consequence, American children tend to adopt a direct, open approach to adults, an approach that may be friendly or aggressive, but that is quite different from the apprehensive, subdued air that European and Oriental children generally have when they approach or are approached by adults.

### *Reward differences among models*

As American children grow older, they become more aware of the status differential that exists between children and adults. For one thing, they learn that it is appropriate for adults to address children by their given names, but that adults expect to be addressed as "Mr. Jones," "Miss Smith," or "Mrs. James." With this learning comes an awareness that in spite of the ambiguities and pretensions that characterize the social relations between adults and children, differences in status and power are very real and important. For one thing, the adult's higher status means that he has considerable

control over the reward system that applies to children.

Joan Grusec and Walter Mischel (1966) studied the learning that takes place in children as they interact with adults with varying potentialities for reward. In their experiment, one of two kinds of persons (who were to serve as behavior models in the experiment) introduced themselves to individual four-year-old children. One type of model told the child she was his new nursery school teacher and spent some time with him playing with a number of very attractive toys and displaying much warmth and affection. The idea was for her to establish herself as an unconditionally rewarding person, having attractive resources at her disposal. The other type of model introduced the child to some worn-out toys, seated herself at a desk, saying she had some work to do, and made no attempt to initiate interaction with the child. The idea here was to present herself as a low-reward person, with few resources at her disposal. After this initial period of orientation, each model played a game with the child involving a series of ritualistic and irrelevant acts—marching, counting, posing with a hat on her head, and the like. After the model left, a confederate, who had been in the room during the game, asked the child how many of the actions of the model he could remember and could imitate. Results showed that children could remember more of the actions of the first type of model than the second. In other words, the model who said she was the children's teacher, and who thus indicated that she had some future power to reward them, was the model from whom the children learned most readily.

What Grusec and Mischel found in this study applies to older children and adults as well: we are more likely to imitate those individuals who have some power to reward or reinforce us in the future. Our learning is, in effect, "payment in advance" for rewards yet to be received. We

prefer such models to those who are more psychologically remote and who lack the power to reward.

A great deal of learning in social contexts is concerned with determining who our models shall be. If the power of models to reinforce us directly is relatively equal, we are inclined to prefer models who are highly visible, who appear to represent the major trend in the groups of which we are members, and who represent values that are not too dissimilar to the ones we subscribe to.

As we interact with other members of our groups, including the models themselves, we imitate behavior that is reinforced and is reinforcing. Indeed, every social situation is one in which we are reinforcing the behavior of others and are ourselves reinforced in return. In one sense, the entire field of social psychology may be viewed as being concerned with the conditions, processes, and products of social reinforcement. This is not the only way, of course, in which social phenomena may be perceived or studied, but it constitutes a significant dimension of social behavior and opens up many avenues for research and investigation.

## *Summary*

Inasmuch as association with others has a reward value, we learn patterns of interaction and social behavior in order to secure these rewards and enhance their continuance. Performance can be facilitated by the amount of attention paid us by others, as well as the degree to which the attention is favorable. Individuals who have previously received relatively less attention are more responsive to social rewards than are those who have received more attention.

Reward and reinforcement explain only part of the behavior that is learned in social contexts. Bandura has criticized reinforcement theories of social learning because of their assumption that the learner has to be reinforced. He maintains that what actually happens is that the learner must first attend to the model's behavior, probably because he anticipates an eventual reward. Stimuli emanating from the model's behavior are processed by the learner through being coded symbolically, organized cognitively, and rehearsed. The resultant product is the learned behavior. Bandura's research showed that reinforcement is not necessary in social learning, although often self-evaluation and self-reinforcement are present. Rotter has also shown that models sometimes induce learning through aiding the learner to define the situation.

Social learning begins in infancy; even cultural styles and patterns of behavior make themselves felt at this age. Cultural value systems are learned during the childhood years, but cultures are often equivocal and may teach mutually inconsistent patterns. Attitudes toward sex in Western societies are an example. The situation is further complicated by the availability of different models for each set of value systems. The models generally constitute reference groups, which serve as sources of behavior and value patterns that are imitated by young people. The fact that a variety of reference groups is available leads to the development of complex patterns of behavior. Values and attitudes learned by young people help determine their perceptual styles: their way of perceiving their environment, as well as their own behavior.

One factor that determines the attractiveness of models is their ability to reward. Given a choice of models, we are likely to prefer those that have a higher reward potential.



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# Chapter 5

## Social Motives and Attitudes

### *Social motives and behavior*

In Chapters 2, 3, and 4, we pointed out that interaction with others has positive value for us, enables us to identify and define ourselves, and has the effect of reinforcing certain aspects of our behavior, thus bringing about the phenomenon we have termed social learning. In this chapter we explore some of the characteristics of the identities and definitions that we learn and that, in turn, lead us to select certain models and reinforcements and to avoid others. We are particularly interested in the kinds of motives generally overlooked by the casual observer, motives that are likely to be implicit and subtle, rather than explicit and obvious.

As Donald T. Campbell (1963) points out, a number of terms with overlapping and interrelated meanings are used by psychologists

to describe social motives and related motivational states. Campbell lists seventy-six of them, running alphabetically from "acquired drive" to "value," and including such terms as "attitude," "frame of reference," "belief," "idea," and "set." Each of these terms describes a somewhat different aspect of the individual's predisposition to behave in one way or another, but all of them are affected by or result from social learning and affect social behavior.

In our discussion we use the term "social motive" as the general term that includes all the others. Motives, of course, produce behavior, and some of the terms listed by Campbell, like "attitude" and "set," may not necessarily lead to any kind of action. It can be argued, however, that if they exist at all they will reveal themselves in some way in the individual's behavior; otherwise their existence may be questioned. Indeed, it is through the behavior of the individual, be it in some direct and obvious form, verbally, or in some indirect way, that we are able to deduce that he does, in fact, have such and such a motive.

Campbell (1963) prefers to use the term "acquired behavioral dispositions," instead of "social motives." His general idea is consistent, however, with the direction we have taken, in that both learning and behavior are implied. Campbell notes that as behavior is modified by experience, there is a certain residue that serves to "guide, bias, or otherwise influence later behavior." It is this residue that concerns us in this chapter.

### *The nature of attitudes*

Gordon W. Allport (1968) noted that the attitude concept "is probably the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary American social psychology" [p. 59]. The fact that attitudes are of greater interest to social psychologists than other varieties of social motives is due to their key role in directing

and channeling social behavior. Daniel Katz and Ezra Stotland (1959) define an attitude as "an individual's tendency or predisposition to evaluate an object or a symbol of that object in a certain way." They conceive of attitudes as having affective, cognitive, and behavioral components, that is, as involving feelings and emotions, beliefs, and action. More of one component than another may be present in a given attitude. Some attitudes are heavily loaded with affective components and do not require any action beyond the expression of feelings. Other attitudes are heavily intellectualized to the point where they cannot be used as valid predictors of the course the individual will take in a social situation. Action-oriented attitudes may involve a minimum of feeling and belief and may emerge when a need can be satisfied simply and directly.

Katz and Stotland maintain that each attitude has a single referent, but that attitudes may be organized into consistent and coherent structures known as *value systems*. The term *ideology* is used to designate integrated sets of beliefs and values that justify the policies of a group or an institution.

Social attitudes, according to Campbell (1963), are characterized by consistency in response to social objects. This consistency facilitates the development of integrated systems of attitudes and values which we use in determining what kind of action to take when faced with any of a wide array of possible situations. These systems enable us to interpret and evaluate events around us and within us; without such a source of cues for interpretation and action, events would seem ambiguous and confused. Value systems determine how we shall perceive and are in themselves ways of perceiving; in fact, it is difficult and often impossible to distinguish between the motive to perceive in a certain way and the perceptual act itself.

A system of attitudes and values may also be conceived as a learned perceptual style that

we come to depend on for the apprehension of "reality." The kind of style we learn and the kind of reality we perceive depend to a large extent on our models. We may occasionally get a glimpse of the insubstantial nature of our "reality" when our predictions of people's future behavior are disconfirmed, or when we find that our interpretations of an event differ markedly from those of people who have been subjected to a different set of learning experiences. Americans view the Hindu custom of permitting cows to wander about the streets, leading a parasitical existence in a land that cannot find enough food for its people, as completely unrealistic and irrational. Hindus, on the other hand, take the stand that cows are really living representations of the mother goddess Kamadhenu, and that to kill them would be a form of murder. Hindus also maintain that the execution of criminals, which is legal in two-thirds of the United States, is actually murder, an allegation that is denied by many Americans, who are certain that they do not become murderers when they execute a criminal. Both the Hindu and the American are generally unaware, in these examples, of the extent to which their "reality" is determined by their culture, as expressed in the attitudes and values of the persons with whom they associate.

### *Conflicts between attitudinal systems*

We noted previously that intellectualized attitudes may serve as poor predictors of the kind of social behavior that actually emerges. People may develop attitudes that are wholly or partially intellectualized out of a need to satisfy two or more conflicting systems of beliefs and/or values. Let us consider the case of Abu Marques, a lawyer and legislator in one of the new, developing countries that was until recently a colonial possession of a European power. Mr. Marques is publicly committed to democracy, for he participates in and openly

supports a government based on a democratic constitution. However, Mr. Marques grew up in a tribal village in the back country that is still dominated by traditional and highly authoritarian patterns of behavior. In his village, power and influence are held in direct proportion to the individual's age and position in the tribal organization. Furthermore, status can only be inherited; it cannot be earned. Women there are treated as second-class citizens, although they received the right to vote when the country gained its independence.

Although Mr. Marques' legislative behavior is exemplary according to democratic standards, his wife and children must defer to him at home. He makes all decisions in his family; his wife has a money allowance on which to run the household, and she must account for every penny. His law office runs along similar lines: his clerks and assistants are expected to treat him with a deference that borders on obsequiousness. Mr. Marques also displays much the same kind of deference to the prime minister and the members of the cabinet. It is clear that his open support of democratic ideals and his political behavior are rather inconsistent with his private behavior and his behavior toward high government officials. Hence, it is not clear what system of values Mr. Marques subscribes to. Some of his behavior is consistent with democratic attitudes, but other aspects are consistent with more authoritarian and traditional patterns. It is very likely that Mr. Marques is unaware of the discrepancy between his public statements endorsing democratic values and his behavior outside the legislative halls.

Such inconsistency is not unusual, of course, and everyone at some time or other expresses attitudes that are inconsistent with other aspects of his behavior. A classic study of such a discrepancy is the field experiment of Richard T. LaPiere (1934), who journeyed across the United States with a Chinese couple many

years ago. Only one out of the 184 restaurants they attempted to eat in refused to serve them, but when LaPiere wrote them later to ask if they served Chinese, 91 percent of the 128 who replied stated they did not do so. Evidently the questionnaires evoked a different reaction (and obviously a different kind of attitude) on the part of the restaurant personnel than was called forth by the appearance of guests expecting to be served. Experiences of black people seeking apartments suggests that a similar study conducted today would produce the opposite effect, namely, a mailed questionnaire polling of landlords would probably elicit the response that they do not practice segregation, but the black person who appears in person and asks to see an apartment is told by the manager that it has been rented. In other words, the questionnaire would evoke a different response than would the appearance of the person on whose behalf it was sent.

Although these examples are notable for the marked degree of inconsistency between stated motives and observed behavior, the persons in each of the situations may be somewhat more consistent than they appear. As we pointed out in Chapter 4, when we discussed the difference between society's official position on sex and the behavior it seems to encourage, people in complex social situations are often faced with the need to respond to a variety of value systems. It would make their problem easier and their behavior more consistent if they would reorient their values and make them mutually compatible, but such an undertaking is hardly feasible in a pluralistic society that tolerates and supports a number of competing ideologies. Some values are likely to have more significance for an individual than are others. Hence, he is inclined to give lip service to certain values that he thinks are widely accepted, but when faced by a critical situation in which there is a high degree of stress, he may react according to a different set of values altogether. To the

observer, the behavior seems inconsistent; to the individual involved, there is no inconsistency, because the differences in the two situations simply call for the application of different sets of principles or values.

One task here is that of determining what processes enable individuals to view their apparently inconsistent behavior as consistent. Such investigation may lead to the discovery of underlying attitude and value structures that would enable us to predict behavior in a wider variety of situations. The basic assumption in such research is that there will be a thread of consistency running through attitudes, values, and the social behavior they govern. Indeed, the fact that people generally behave consistently underlies much of the research concerned with the measurement of attitudes.

### *The Measurement of Attitudes*

Attitudes cannot be directly observed, but must be inferred from behavior, either from observation of an individual's responses to objects, persons, and other events or from his evaluative statements and other verbal expressions. It is difficult to observe the actions of an individual in any direct, systematic way, although sometimes this approach is the only way of determining the significance an attitude has for a person. It is usually easier and more efficient to base such judgments on the individual's verbal—written or spoken—statements. This can be done through interview, but the task can be accomplished even more efficiently and precisely with paper-and-pencil scales and questionnaires. There are some disadvantages to the paper-and-pencil method, but because this technique permits the collection of a great deal of information in a short time, and because instruments can be defined and elaborated to a high degree, social psychologists have used this approach more than others. Results

obtained from paper-and-pencil instruments also have the added advantage of being easier to analyze statistically.

### *Dimensions of attitudes*

Attitude measures are concerned first of all with the *direction* of the attitude being assessed: is it for or against the object, person, or event that is the target or focus of the attitude? On a typical attitude scale, direction may be indicated on a "like-dislike" dimension, by checking "yes" or "no," or one of similar pairs of options.

The *intensity* or strength of an attitude is also important. Does the respondent feel strongly about the target of the attitude, or are his feelings weak or ambivalent? Intensity can be measured in various ways: by indicating one's position on a graduated scale of values, by selecting a statement from an array whose intensity ranges from "strong" to "weak," or by checking a greater or lesser number of options weighted in a given direction. Both direction and intensity are heavily loaded with the affective component of attitudes mentioned earlier. Direction indicates feeling for or against, and intensity indicates the strength of feelings involved in the attitude being expressed.

Measurers of attitudes are sometimes concerned about the *centrality* of an attitude. Is it close to the center of a system of attitudes and values that are highly significant to the welfare and goals of the individual? Does it occupy a key position? Or is it a peripheral and marginal attitude? Implications for affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects are all involved. Attitudes that are strongly held are likely to be central, are likely to be supported by a set of beliefs, and are also likely to provide motives for action. An example of centrality is those attitudes held with reference to the self. People tend to feel more strongly about themselves

than about any other object. Their beliefs about themselves and their relations with their environment are likely to be strongly held, to the point where they are quite ready to go on the defensive if either attitudes or supporting beliefs are attacked or questioned. Self-regarding attitudes also serve as guidelines for actions of all kinds and hence can be considered as important motivators for behavior.

Related to centrality and intensity is *salience*—the degree to which an attitude is given prominence by its holder—its visibility, so to speak. Not all central attitudes are salient. Henry Long's attitudes toward himself are, like most people's both central and intense, but he does not give them any particular prominence in his everyday interaction with others. He does, however, work very hard trying to recruit members for the religious sect to which he belongs, even bringing religion into every conversation. Anyone who knows Henry thinks of him in terms of the sect he represents, and his attitudes on religion, therefore, have a high degree of salience.

Attitudes may also be measured in terms of their *consistency*—the extent to which various attitudes and attitude systems fit together and are related. We would expect that because Henry Long is such a devout and loyal member of his particular religious sect, he also has a high regard for the other members of that sect. Such an attitude would be consistent with the attitudes whose salience he has revealed by his industrious attempts to proselytize. If we discover that he actually has a *low* opinion of his fellow church members, we are surprised, because such an attitude is inconsistent with his attitudes toward his religion. The attitudes that an individual has toward an institution, such as a church, are ordinarily consistent with his attitudes toward persons associated with the institution. Vernon Jones (1970) found, in a survey of student attitudes over a 37-year period, that attitudes favorable toward religion



and the church were associated with a belief in personal ethics (good individuals make a good society), rather than in social ethics (good societies make good individuals). Those favorable toward religion also tended to rank service to society, rather than understanding the world and self, as their chief goal in attending college. These consistencies are understandable in view of the tendencies of churches to stress personal values—ethics—and service to society.

### *Types of measures*

Early attempts to measure attitudes consisted of fairly loose, ad hoc lists of statements presumably related to the attitude at issue. L. L. Thurstone, with the help of E. J. Chave (1929), developed a more refined method of scaling statements which he called "the method of subjectively appearing equal intervals" (Thurstone, 1931). The Thurstone equal appearing interval scale is a more common term today. The Thurstone method consists of making a collection of opinions, ranging from very positive to very negative, about a certain object, person, or institution. The statements are then given to a group of individuals who are asked to judge the opinions on an eleven-point scale, on which 1, shall we say, represents the most favorable, and 11 the least favorable. The judges are asked to try to arrange the statements in such a way that they are distributed over the full range, from 1 to 11. The median rating that judges assign in a given statement is then taken as an index to the strength and direction of the attitude expressed by the statement. Table 5-1 presents a sampling of items drawn from the Desegregation Scale, a twenty-six item scale that has been used in a study of attitudes toward Negroes in the South (Kelly, Ferson, & Holtzman, 1958). The researchers began with a pool of 200 statements from which they selected seventy-six that they considered to be better than the others. The seventy-six statements were then submitted to a panel of 102

college students, who rated them on Thurstone's eleven-point scale. The twenty-six items on which the judges showed the most agreement were then selected to form the Desegregation Scale. The values to the left of each item in Table 5-1 represent their original scale values. These values were converted to a five-point scale for simplicity in scoring. In other words, a respondent who agrees with the first item in the sample would receive a 4 for that response, whereas a respondent who agrees with the last item would receive a 0. The highest possible score on the scale would therefore be 104, and the lowest possible would be 0. The higher the score, the more negative the attitude toward Negroes.

A different method of measuring attitudes has been developed by Rensis Likert (1932). Like the Thurstone questionnaire, the respondent is confronted with a series of statements, but instead of indicating mere agreement or

*Table 5-1. Sampling of Items from Thurstone's Desegregation Scale and Ranked from the Least Favorable (1) to the Most Favorable (11). (Kelly, Ferson, & Holtzman, 1958)*

10.4	The Negro will remain ignorant and superstitious despite equal educational opportunities.
8.9	Negroes living in white neighborhoods lower the standards of cleanliness.
7.7	Admitting Negroes to white schools would not work because most Negroes do not have the necessary background to keep up with white students.
4.3	The Negro race will eventually reach the cultural and intellectual level of white people.
3.4	I would not object to participating in school athletics with Negroes.
2.1	I would not object to dancing with a good Negro dancer.
1.1	The best way to solve the race problem is to encourage intermarriage so that there will eventually be only one race.

disagreement, he is able to choose one of five alternatives: strongly agree (1), agree (2), undecided (3), disagree (4), and strongly disagree (5). The statements are then submitted to a group of respondents who make their responses to each item. The results are then analyzed statistically, items that have the highest intercorrelation with the total score on all the items are retained and the others eliminated. The purpose of this procedure is to obtain a group of items which measure the same attitude or complex of attitudes. Such a test thus possesses a high degree of internal consistency and shows significant differences between those who favor the matter in question and those who are negatively inclined.

Another method introduced by Louis Guttman (1950) ranks groups of statements in such a way that an affirmative answer to any one of them assumes an affirmative answer to all the others ranking below it on the scale. Questions have to be meticulously phrased and carefully pretested to meet this criterion, but the resulting instrument is said to be highly reliable and consistent. Many researchers prefer to use Likert scales in their research because they are easier to construct than either Thurstone or Guttman scales (Aiken, 1970).

Still another type of scale is the semantic differential, which requires the respondent to rate an object, person, or event on a number of bipolar scales (e.g., good-bad, hot-cold). This method has been used to measure the affective aspects of the meaning of words, and we shall give it more extended treatment in the chapter on communication.

There are also various kinds of free-response techniques, some of which are verbal and others which use paper and pencil. They have the advantage of enabling respondents to mention salient attitudes that might otherwise escape the attention of researchers, but have the disadvantage of being difficult to score, and results generally do not possess a high degree of statistical precision. Free-response methods

are also useful in gathering information on highly significant attitudes that respondents would conceal if more direct forms of questions were used. For example, when respondents in one study were asked in an hour-long interview what they worried about, only one mentioned sex or love life. But when respondents were shown a cartoon of a person being asked what kind of problem was bothering him, they were much more likely to suggest that his problem was his love life (Sanford, 1951).

There is no end to the ingenuity of researchers who are looking for unobtrusive ways of measuring attitudes. The 1968 presidential campaign was one noted for the vigorous speeches of George Wallace on the topic of law and order. Just prior to the election, it happened that a Tennessee county passed an ordinance requiring all resident motorists to purchase and display a special \$15 tax sticker on their automobiles. Any driver whose car was not displaying the sticker after October 31 (five days before the election) was subject to arrest and the payment of a \$50 fine. The fact that so many motorists were also decorating the bumpers of their cars with stickers publicizing the candidate of their choice made it possible to determine whether those who endorsed George Wallace and, presumably, law and order were also observing the law by displaying the tax sticker. A survey of automobiles parked in public parking lots showed that over 25% of cars bearing Wallace bumper strips failed to display the tax sticker and hence were in violation of the county law. This percentage was in contrast with a 13.2% violation rate for cars bearing Humphrey and Nixon stickers. The fact that there was no difference in the violation rate for new or old cars bearing Wallace bumper strips showed that economic considerations were not a factor in the failure to pay the tax (Wrightsmen, 1969).

The technique used in this research was used to identify two kinds of attitudes: (a) attitudes toward presidential nominees, with particular

attention to the law-and-order candidate, and (b) attitudes toward law observance, as indicated by the purchase of the \$15 tax sticker. What was particularly interesting in this study was the disparity between the two kinds of attitudes: it was clear that the motorists who supported law and order in the form of an aggressive presidential candidate were less likely than other motorists to observe the law when it came to paying taxes.

### *The Authoritarian Personality*

Persons who are characteristically preoccupied with law-and-order issues are likely to express other attitudes consistent with that concern. Vernon Jones (1970), in his 37-year survey, found that students favorable to preparedness for war tended to favor firmer (more punitive) approaches in dealing with delinquency. Such attitudes tend to be interrelated, or clustered, and are termed *authoritarian attitudes* by investigators in the allied fields of personality and social psychology. Authoritarian attitudes have occupied a prominent place in such research during the last quarter of a century. More studies have appeared dealing with this attitude cluster than with any other. Such research is of general interest as well, for it has important implications for many different kinds of social behavior, such as child-rearing practices, leadership, group problem solving, and ethnic prejudice.

Authoritarian attitudes are expressed in behavior variously described as dogmatic, rigid, strongly supportive of traditional values, and highly status-oriented—behavior, in other words, that is submissive toward individuals possessing higher status and domineering where lower-status individuals are concerned. Also consistent with authoritarian attitudes are tendencies to endorse the use of power tactics, toughness in dealing with failure and non-

cooperativeness, arbitrariness in decision making, and willingness to use drastic methods in dealing with deviant behavior. The activities of Nazis and other fascist groups are often cited as prime examples of authoritarianism, but any individual who uses or endorses harsh, punitive, or violent methods is motivated by authoritarian attitudes.

The word *authoritarian* is roughly equivalent to *autocratic*, and its opposite, *equalitarian*, is approximately equivalent to *democratic*. Authoritarian attitudes are characteristic of relations among people who regard themselves and one another as basically unequal in value, whereas democratic attitudes imply equal-value relationships. We are not referring here to inequality or equality in wealth, skill, or physical strength, but rather to the way in which people regard one another. The more people regard themselves and each other as worthy of equal consideration, merely by virtue of their existence as human beings, the more their relationships will take place on a democratic basis. The more the mutually perceived personal value departs from equality, the more the relationship is likely to be characterized by authoritarian attitudes and behavior.

Striving to maintain equal status relationships precludes the use of power, inasmuch as recourse to power tactics would imply an inequality in status. Maintaining democratic or equalitarian relationships thus means that problems must be resolved on the basis of a desire to understand and consider the interests of all concerned. Inasmuch as such an approach is time consuming and may lead to lengthy negotiation, it follows that patience, restraint, and self-control are needed to keep matters from regressing to the kind of drastic and arbitrary tactics characteristic of authoritarian modes of behavior.

Although social psychologists often refer to the *"authoritarian personality"* as though it were a distinct type, they recognize that in actu-

ality there is a scale of behavior that ranges from "extremely authoritarian" to "extremely democratic." Social behavior and attitudes can be referred to positions on such a scale to determine whether they are more or less authoritarian. Similarly, individuals can be rated on such a scale in terms of the kind of behavior they usually or most characteristically display, keeping in mind that people may vary somewhat from one social situation to another, but also recognizing that there tends to be a mode or a norm that most of us conform to in our relations with others. The point is that both "authoritarian" and "democratic" represent extreme polar positions and that most people would be grouped around the middle of such a scale.

### *The Berkeley study*

The classic study of authoritarian traits was conducted at the University of California in Berkeley during the 1940's and published in 1950. The study was subsidized by the research department of the American Jewish Committee, and the motivation to conduct the investigation seems to have been, at least as far as the Committee was concerned, the fear that fascism might become as much of a menace in the United States as it did in Germany. The researchers designed a number of special questionnaires, collected large quantities of data over a period of several years, and published their report, *The authoritarian personality*, in 1950 (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950). The appearance of *The authoritarian personality* was a signal event in the history of social psychology for a number of reasons. It represented the first large-scale study of attitudes and personality using a combination of personality tests and attitude scales, together with clinical interviews and projective techniques. The study further focused on a topic that was of immediate and long-range

importance from the standpoint of national and international politics, as well as from the standpoint of personal interest. The values and attitudes probed by the researchers lay at the very center of interpersonal and intergroup behavior.

The researchers proceeded by surveying opinions of the total membership of a number of different groups. Subjects included students from universities, public school teachers, prison inmates, psychiatric patients, veterans groups, labor unions, and service clubs. Over 2000 subjects were studied in one way or another. Four basic types of questionnaires were developed for the study: measures of anti-Semitism, political and economic conservatism, ethnocentrism, and antidemocratic trends. The latter two variables were measured by the E scale (for ethnocentrism) and the F scale (for fascism), instruments that have attracted a great deal of attention from psychologists, and it is these two scales that shall concern us primarily as we discuss authoritarian attitudes in this textbook. Here are representative items from the scales:

"America may not be perfect, but the American Way has brought us about as close as human beings can get to a perfect society." (E scale)

"Negroes have their rights, but it is best to keep them in their own districts and schools and to prevent too much contact with whites." (E scale)

"Homosexuality is a particularly rotten form of delinquency and ought to be severely punished." (F scale)

"To a greater extent than most people realize our lives are governed by plots hatched in secret by politicians." (F scale)

As data from questionnaires, personality tests, and interviews were accumulated and analyzed by the researchers, a number of trends emerged. For one thing, the correlations among the four scales were quite high and positive.

The anti-Semitic scale, for example, correlated .80 with the E scale, and the E scale correlated .73 with the F scale. Persons scoring high on any of these scales also seemed to differ in a number of significant ways from those scoring low. There was a tendency, for example, for low scorers to be more intrceptive than high scorers—that is, the low scorers were more inclined to be introspective and self-analytical and to question their own values and behavior, whereas the high scorers resisted any idea of self-appraisal and based their life decisions on a reality that they perceived as being ordered by hard-and-fast rules. Persons scoring high on the scales were inclined to see a multitude of dangers in ambiguous situations, to deal with deviant behavior in drastic ways, to insist on obedience and deference on the part of low status individuals, and to accord obedience and deference to those of higher status. High scorers tended to react to sex with guilt and anxiety, but also to see it as the means for achieving status and dominance, whereas low scorers saw sex as implying warmth, companionship, and mutual affection. Low-scoring subjects were more accepting of themselves and more ambivalent toward their parents and authority figures; they also showed more tolerance of ambiguous situations, were less inclined to be rigid or to excuse their own hostile or disturbing feelings by blaming them on the actions or intentions of others.

The Berkeley study has received considerable criticism, largely because the researchers were not as meticulous as they should have been in maintaining the usual scientific controls. For example, determination of subjects' ratings on authoritarianism was made by interviewers who had access before the interview to each subject's completed questionnaire. It was thus possible for preconceptions to color the percepts of interviewers. Furthermore, each interview record was scored by only one

judge, thus making it impossible to determine the amount of bias that had entered into the scoring.

### *Further Research On Authoritarian Attitudes*

Much of the research on authoritarian attitudes that has been published since the appearance of *The authoritarian personality* has been concerned with the validity of the F scale. Inasmuch as the correlations between the F scale and the other three scales used in the Berkeley study were so high, it is usually considered to be a measure not only of authoritarianism, but an indirect measure of anti-Semitism, ethnocentrism, and economic conservatism as well.

Validity studies conducted with F scale have turned up some additional unresolved problems growing out of the Berkeley study. People who are rigid, who demand absolute and unquestioning obedience to persons in higher authority, who are intolerant of ambiguity, and who believe in drastic solutions to social problems ought to score high on the F scale. The work done by the Berkeley group and the researchers who have followed them shows that such people do, in fact, score high, but only if they are politically conservative or reactionary. People with *leftish* political views who are rigid, demand absolute obedience, etc., do *not* score high, but score in the middle and low ranges. In other words, the F scale appears to be a test of right wing, traditional authoritarianism only, and not of left-wing radical authoritarianism (Christie, 1956).

F-scale scores also tend to be negatively correlated both with education and with tendencies to be independent of conformity pressures (Lindgren, 1961, 1962, Lindgren & Singer, 1963, Al Omar et al., 1965). A number of studies have shown them to be negatively correlated with intelligence test scores, and lower

social classes tend to score higher on authoritarianism than middle and upper classes (MacKinnon & Centers, 1956).

These negative correlations with education, independence, intelligence, and social class are also related to the question of whether the F scale measures authoritarian tendencies or merely acquiescence. The F-scale items, like most of the items in the four scales developed by the researchers, are stated in a positive form, so that agreement with an item results in increases in scores on the authoritarian side of the ledger, and disagreement leads to decreases. It is obvious, therefore, that persons who characteristically and uncritically agree with printed statements will score high on the F scale, irrespective of the extent to which they possess other characteristics associated with authoritarianism. It is also quite possible, of course, that highly authoritarian people are more inclined to mark statements "agree" than are persons with strong democratic leanings, but the original researchers on the authoritarian personality did not explore this possibility.

There has been considerable debate on this topic, but the problem now seems to have been resolved. Couch and Keniston (1960) reported success in constructing F-scale-type items that could be scored negatively and that were not mere reversals of the original positive F scale. Here are two examples:

"People tend to place too much emphasis on respect for authority."

"It may well be that children who talk back to their parents actually respect them more in the long run."

Couch and Keniston devised a 360-item test for measuring tendencies to agree with questionnaire items. Persons scoring high on this test they termed "yeasayers," and those scoring low "naysayers." When they studied yeasayers more intensively, using other measures and

clinical interviews, they found that they appeared to be impulsive, anxious, dependent, and easily upset—persons who are described by clinical psychologists as having "weak ego controls." Naysayers, on the other hand, tended to be more mature and independent, with good impulse control. The important outcome of this research, as far as our present discussion is concerned, was the finding that there was only moderate agreement between yeasaying and authoritarianism as measured by the revised positive F scale. The correlation was .37, which, though statistically significant, meant that acquiescence was involved in only about 14% of what the F scale measures. The correlation of acquiescence with a *balanced* F scale (one composed of both positive and negative items) was only .09, which suggests that the best way to eliminate acquiescence as a factor when measuring authoritarian tendencies is to use a balanced scale.

In spite of methodological flaws, *The authoritarian personality* still remains an impressive work. Its main theses—that authoritarianism is a significant variable in social behavior, that it can be measured with a fair degree of accuracy, and that it is related to a large number of personality variables—have stood the test of much painstaking research. Table 5-2 presents in brief form the findings of a few of these studies. A quick review shows that whatever its shortcomings, the F scale does distinguish between persons whose behavior shows authoritarian tendencies and those whose behavior does not. The net effect is a rather firm endorsement of the general conclusions of the Berkeley study.

### *Related personality variables*

Milton Rokeach (1960) developed some scales measuring *dogmatism* (closed-mindedness, intolerance) that appeared at first to be an

**Table 5-2. Brief Summaries of the Findings of Research Studies Using the F Scale as a Measure of Authoritarianism***Tendencies to express hostility toward low-status persons.*

1. High scorers on the F scale were more likely to respond with personal hostility to low-status frustrators, but with only indirect hostility to high-status frustrators (Roberts & Jessor, 1958).
2. In an experiment in which subjects thought they were administering electric shocks, high F scorers were more aggressive and punitive than low F scorers, particularly toward low-status individuals (Epstein, 1965, 1966).

*Tendencies to attribute hostile and derogatory motives to others (projection).*

3. When asked to rate the photographs of strangers on personality traits, high F scorers tended to display more suspicion, fear, and moral condemnation in rating the strangers. At the same time, they gave themselves high ratings on the same scales on which they had rated the strangers low (DeSoto, Kueth, & Wunderlich, 1960).
4. High F scorers had more dreams in which aggression was directed at out-group members and more dreams with friendly content about in-group members (Meer, 1955).

*Tendencies to endorse conventional and traditional values.*

5. There was a high correlation (+ .61) between the F scale and a scale measuring agreement with traditional attitudes about family relationships (between children and parents, between husbands and wives, etc.) (Byrne, 1965).

*Tendencies to be rigid and dogmatic.*

6. When placed in an ego-involving situation, high F scorers were more likely to display rigid patterns of behavior, which, in turn, interfered with their ability to solve complex problems (Brown, 1953).
7. A measure of tendencies to be rigid in personal matters correlated + .62 with the F scale (Meresko, Rubin, Shontz, & Morrow, 1954).
8. The F scale was found to be significantly correlated with a measure of intolerance of ambiguity (Kelman & Barclay, 1963).

*Validation of F scale by pooled ratings of peers.*

9. F scores of the members of college fraternities were found to correspond to the fraternities' reputations for being authoritarian or nonauthoritarian (Wells, Chiaravalle, & Goldman, 1957).

*Tendencies to devalue out-group members*

10. White high F-scale scorers tended to rate recorded voices of black persons less favorably than the voices of whites, irrespective of whether they had been informed as to the race of the speaker (Sattler, Davidson, & Palumbo, 1971).

improvement over the F scale, in that they seemed to play no favorites as far as left and right-wing extremism was concerned. Later research, however, has failed to substantiate this early promise. Kirtley and Harkless (1969) found that dogmatism was closely related to

conservatism and prejudice toward out-groups and wondered whether subjects scoring low on the Dogmatism scale were being defensive against being considered conservative or prejudiced, and were trying to convey an impression of "open-mindedness." Thomas E. Linton

(1968) found an inverse relationship between scores on the Dogmatism scale and academic achievement in high school and noted that a similar negative relationship had been encountered in a previous study between achievement and F-scale scores. In sum, the Dogmatism scale has proved to be a useful research device, but it appears to be measuring a cluster of attitudes similar to those tapped by the F scale.

Philip G. Zimbardo (1970) has conducted a number of studies on *deindividuation*, a process that appears to facilitate authoritarian behavior. Zimbardo maintains that the more aware a person is of being an *individual*, the less likely he is to give way to impulsive, irrational, and irresponsible behavior. Such impulsiveness may be prosocial (e.g., love) or antisocial (e.g., hostile aggression.) We mention deindividuation in the present context, because much of Zimbardo's work is concerned with its aggressive aspects. Deindividuation is more likely to occur in situations in which the individual feels anonymous and without identity—such as when he is away from home in an environment in which no one knows who he is, when he is disguised, when he is part of a large crowd, or when he is under the influence of psychoactive drugs, like alcohol or cannabis.

In one of Zimbardo's experiments, college women were disguised in hoods and assembled in groups of four. None of the women knew the names of the others, and they were, to all intents and purposes, anonymous. The women then participated in a complex interview in which they were directed to administer electric shock to a subject. In actuality, the subject was a confederate who did not receive any shock but had been trained to react with expressions of pain whenever a "shock" key was pressed. A control group of women were not clad in hoods, and hence were not considered by the experimenter to have been "deindividuated." Zimbardo's hypothesis that the deindividuated women would deliver more shock to the

"subject" was supported, for the shocks they administered lasted twice as long, on the average, as those given by the control group. They also tended to increase their shock as the experiment went on.

Zimbardo notes that the more the aggressor is made to feel like an individual, the more restrained and responsible he becomes. Similarly, the more someone is aware of his victims as real persons—as individuals—the more he is inhibited in his attacks on them. Crime, particularly violent or destructive crime, is made possible by the feeling the criminal has that he will not be caught, and hence will remain anonymous—deindividuated.

Another personality variable that is of interest here is Machiavellianism, named after the famed political writer of the Italian Renaissance, whose treatise, *The prince*, has achieved notoriety as a handbook for all who wish to manipulate and exploit others. Machiavellianism (Mach) is a factor or behavior style that characterizes individuals who are willing to manipulate others, and who do not shrink from the use of power in interpersonal relations. Richard Christie and Florence Geis (1968, 1971) have constructed a number of scales that tap various dimensions of Mach. Contrary to early expectations, the correlation of the scales with measures of authoritarianism is essentially zero, nor are there any significant correlations with psychopathology, political ideology, or social class. Results obtained with Mach scales, however, show that the more individuals are involved in working with others, the higher their Mach scores.

Mach scores are also positively related to the ability to meet the demands of American society, including getting along in college. In fact, students coming from "prestige colleges" are likely to score higher on Mach scales than those from other schools. College students rating high on Mach scales are also able to outmanipulate their lower-scoring opponents and



consistently win laboratory games. One game was designed to test skill in interpersonal bargaining and was set up in the form of "legislative log rolling," in which players tried to use one another in winning both trivial and important issues. It was hypothesized that low-Mach scorers would become emotionally involved in the significant issues and hence would play less skillfully, whereas high-Mach subjects would remain detached and objective. Results supported the hypothesis: low-Mach subjects lost on issues they most strongly endorsed, because they were distracted by ego-involving elements in the bargaining context, whereas high-Mach subjects remained detached and concentrated on winning.

Christie and Geis note that there is no difference in the performance of high- and low-Mach subjects in situations that are highly structured and in which there is no face-to-face contact. In interpersonal situations that are relatively unstructured, complex, and "fluid," however, high-Mach subjects tend to win. Christie and Geis attribute the success of the high-Mach individuals to their "singular disregard of others as individuals" and their tendency to "stereotype them as weak and subject to pressure" [p. 358]. Another advantage the high-Mach individual has is his ability to perceive accurately the weaknesses of others. The low-Mach individual, on the other hand, tends to be outmaneuvered and defeated by high-Mach manipulators, all the while clinging to his idealistic beliefs about how people should behave. As Christie and Geis say, "Sometimes it is not so much that high Machs win as that low Machs lose."

## *Social Motives Considered as Needs*

### *Psychological needs*

The concept of need is in some ways a more fundamental approach to the explanation of

behavior than are the complexes or clusters of attitudes we have been discussing in the last few pages. *Need* is a term borrowed from physiology by way of clinical psychology and personality theory. A need is, basically, a lack of something vital or important to the organism—a deficit. We all have needs for water, nourishment, oxygen, and warmth. We also have needs to be active, to rest, and to void wastes. The use of the word "need" is sometimes criticized because it actually explains nothing: it merely seems to be a label tacked on to the fact that everyone does these things. It does more than merely designate goals or behaviors, however; it also implies that a given goal or behavior is vital, and that without it life would cease, or normal growth would be compromised or impeded.

Psychological needs are an extension of this basic idea, except that we do not generally think of psychological needs as being crucial to human existence in an immediate sense, although they may have long-range implications with respect to the ability to survive. They are, instead, categories of goals and/or behaviors that vary considerably from person to person, but that function to a greater or lesser extent in all of us. Another way to look at psychological needs is to think of them as motives rooted in systems or complexes of attitudes or values that are more or less consistent with one another and that function to generate certain kinds of behavior.

Although there is considerable interpersonal variation in the strength of physiological needs, there tends to be even greater variation in psychological needs. Even the universal need to associate with others, discussed in Chapter 2, is highly variable in persistence and intensity. Although physiological needs can be modified in their intensity by social learning, psychological needs are even more responsive to such modification, and indeed some needs, like the need for achievement and the need for power, are principally the result of social learning.

### *The need for stimulation*

In Chapter 2 we mentioned the need for stimulation as a major factor in the universal tendency to seek the company of others: to associate. Like other needs, this motive is stronger in some individuals than in others. S. M. Sales (1971) hypothesized that persons with a high need for stimulation are attracted to and react favorably to complex, novel, and interesting situations, whereas those rating low in this need prefer quiet, peaceful, and simple situations. Sales conducted a number of experiments whose results appear to confirm these hypotheses. Subjects were selected on the basis of their responses in blindfold tests in which they were given a chance to minimize or exaggerate stimuli from objects they were handling. The minimizers were classified as having a high need for stimulation (because they were under-rating and were thus "not getting enough" stimulation from what they were feeling), and the exaggeraters were rated as being low in need for stimulation (because they were over-rating and thus "getting too much" stimulation from what they were feeling).

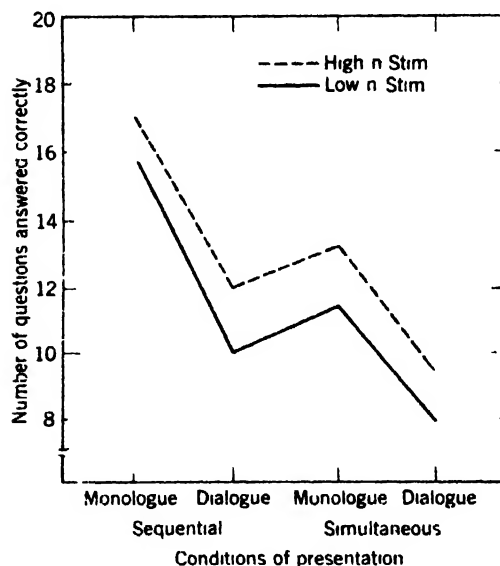
Subsequent tests showed that subjects with high need for stimulation (*n Stim*) preferred complex designs while those low in *n Stim* preferred simple ones. When left alone in a room for 7½ minutes, high-*n Stim* subjects were observed (through a one-way mirror) to be more restless than low-*n Stim* subjects. In a problem-solving session in a small-group context, high-*n Stim* male subjects made considerably more statements than did low-*n Stim* subjects. In still another experiment, subjects listened to a monologue and a complex dialogue presented to them in sequential fashion; then they heard a monologue and dialogue presented simultaneously through the two speakers of a stereophonic apparatus. In each instance they were told to pay particular attention to the monologue, rather than the dialogue. Then they were tested on their reten-

tion for *both* presentations. The hypothesis that the high-*n Stim* subjects would pay more attention to and remember more of the dialogue was supported, as Figure 5-1 shows. Sales believed that his findings also indicate that differences in *n Stim* "may account for an unexpectedly large amount of social behavior which we observe in ourselves and others" [p. 133].

### *Theories regarding needs*

Personality theorists use a number of different systems of classifying needs. Abraham Maslow's (1954) system of basic psychological needs, that we discussed briefly in Chapter 2, has been used rather extensively by personality theorists and researchers. It has a five-fold structure:

1. *Physiological needs*—needs basic to the maintenance of the body processes.



**Figure 5-1.** Number of questions answered correctly by subjects with a high need for stimulation (*n Stim*) or a low *n Stim* when they were asked to listen to a monologue followed by a complex dialogue, then a monologue and a dialogue presented simultaneously (after Sales, 1971).

2. *Safety needs*—needs to avoid external dangers or anything that may harm the individual.

3. *Belongingness and love needs*—the need to be given love, affection, and nurturance by another person or persons.

4. *Esteem needs*—needs to be valued, accepted, and appreciated as a person; to achieve and be adequate; to acquire status, recognition, and attention.

5. *Self-actualization*—the need for self-fulfillment.

Maslow makes a number of points about his list of needs. First, they are ordered in a developmental sequence, from those that are lower in their biological development, to those that are higher. Second, the order represents a kind of priority. Biological needs must be satisfied before an individual can turn his attention to higher needs. Furthermore, although higher needs can be postponed and are less urgent, living at the level of higher needs leads to greater biological efficiency.

It can be seen from Maslow's list that socialized needs are largely at the third and fourth levels, although social learning affects attitudes and behavior at all five levels.

Arnoff and Messe (1971) used two of Maslow's needs as the basis for an experiment involving cooperation and collaboration in the context of small groups. Subjects were preselected on the basis of their replies to a sentence-completion test designed to measure their orientation to *safety needs* and *esteem needs*. Those who were preoccupied with meeting safety needs showed preferences for an orderly and predictable world. They seemed uncertain as to their ability to cope with social relationships, tasks, or personal feelings, and their outlook on life was characterized by feelings of insecurity, mistrust, dependency, and incompetence. The researchers hypothesized that such individuals would collectively develop a group structure in which leadership functions would

be concentrated in a few members, because of their reluctance to take charge of their own activities and their desire to have someone take responsibility for them.

Subjects who focused on esteem needs expressed a strong desire to demonstrate competence and achieve respect from others. Their responses were characterized by confidence, mastery, and dominance. The investigators hypothesized that esteem-need subjects would generate a shared form of leadership, partly because they wished to demonstrate competence to others (as well as to themselves), and partly because they would not tolerate the domination of one or two group members.

The subjects were organized into groups of five according to their need orientation. The groups were then assigned the task of planning and sketching a "living-learning" dormitory. As hypothesized by the investigators, the results showed that interaction in the safety-need oriented groups tended to be dominated by a few individuals, whereas the esteem-need oriented groups functioned with a great deal more equally shared participation.

Another approach to classification of psychological needs is one proposed by Henry A. Murray (1938). There are twenty needs in Murray's list, ranging alphabetically from the "need for abasement" to the "need for understanding." Murray's needs are counterbalanced by "presses," which were defined in terms of what an object may do to the individual or for the individual, that is, in terms of its power to affect the well-being of the individual in one way or another. The strength of needs and presses in an individual's life may be determined by a number of clinical techniques, but the method most favored by Murray is the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), a series of photographs and drawings that psychologists use to elicit stories from subjects. These stories can be analyzed and scored in terms of the degree

to which they reflect the presence of various needs and presses.

### *The need to achieve*

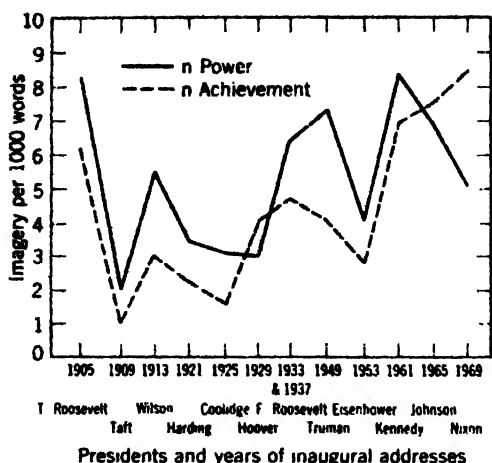
Although all of Murray's needs have been incorporated in one way or another into personality research, the need that has attracted the greatest amount of attention in recent years has been the need to achieve (for which we will use the common abbreviation "n Ach"). As the term implies, n Ach relates to accomplishment: mastering, manipulating, and organizing the physical and social environment; overcoming obstacles and maintaining high standards of work; competing through striving to excel one's previous performance, as well as rivaling and surpassing others; and the like. It is often contrasted with n Aff (need to affiliate), a need that relates to socializing: interacting with others, particularly with peers; pleasing others and winning their affection; expressing and maintaining attitudes of loyalty to family and to friends. Obviously, although n Ach and n Aff are not exact opposites, they imply different things. Under the goad of n Ach we tend to avoid others so as to concentrate on getting our work finished and are attracted to others only to the extent that they can help us accomplish our self-assigned tasks. Under the influence of n Aff, we are likely to place socializing and maintaining good relationships with others ahead of getting our work done. If personal accomplishment makes our friends' efforts appear inferior, we are likely to conceal our successes or even stop making efforts to succeed. It is difficult to maintain a balance between n Ach and n Aff; most of us try to accomplish this end by "compartmentalizing" our lives—by reserving some time and some activities for personal accomplishment and some for socializing.

Also contrasted with n Ach is n Power, the need to dominate and control. At first glance,

n Ach and n Power seem similar, because people who are driven by a need to achieve often seek power to further their own ends, and people with power appear to be in a position to achieve many goals that are beyond the reach of those who lack the means. People who are dominated by n Power, however, are more interested in prestige, as well as controlling and manipulating others, whereas those who are dominated by n Ach are interested in personal accomplishment, with or without the collaboration of others, but preferably without. Both n Aff and n Power are compatible with the values of traditionalist cultures, whereas n Ach is less compatible, because it is more individualistic.

Political leaders are characteristically dominated by n Power, and in the North American culture, where personal achievement is widely admired, they often express both needs. Richard E. Donley and David G. Winter (1970) used the McClelland scoring method (described later in this chapter) to analyze the inaugural addresses of the last thirteen presidents of the United States. Figure 5-2 presents the n Ach and n Power imagery per 1000 words for each president and shows that the two needs tended to be positively correlated, as far as this group is concerned. It is interesting to note that the presidents rating highest in n Power were Democrats. This is also true of the four presidents who were targets of assassins' attacks. The ratings also tended to confirm hypotheses based on the actions and the personal style displayed by the presidents during their terms of office, and demonstrate a fairly close relationship between presidents' words and deeds.

Persons who score high on measures of n Ach enjoy exercising and testing their competencies and hence are attracted to tasks that are moderately difficult and that have some risk. They are, in effect, more attracted to success than they are frightened by the possibility of failure. Tasks that are too easy, with no chance for failure, are less attractive, because



**Figure 5-2.** Power and achievement motivation scores (*n* Power and *n* Achievement) based on thematic analyses of the inaugural addresses of presidents of the United States from 1905 onward (after Donley & Winter, 1970).

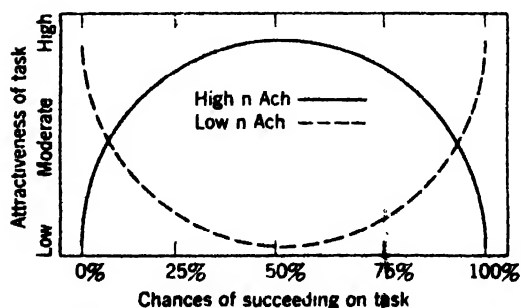
they offer little challenge. On the other hand, very high-risk tasks, in which the elements for success are largely beyond the individual's control, are not attractive to them: the costs are much greater than the potential rewards.

Persons scoring low in *n* Ach measures lack confidence in themselves and are more anxious about failure than they are interested about success. They tend to have a low opinion of their abilities as well. They are therefore attracted to low-risk tasks, in which there is little chance for failure. Middle-risk tasks are avoided, partly because of lack of confidence and partly because of their strong *fear of failure* (FF). Oddly enough, high-risk ventures attract them, because they feel that success beyond the easiest of tasks is just a matter of luck anyhow. It is probably the low *n* Ach people who provide the best market for lottery tickets, whereas the high *n* Ach individual, if he gambles at all, is likely to prefer a game of skill in which he can compete with individuals who are about his own level of competence. Weiner and Kukla (1970) explain the differences in task prefer-

ence of high and low-*n* Ach scorers in terms of the kind of information the two types of individuals are seeking. High-*n* Ach persons are attracted to tasks of intermediate difficulty because they are looking for information about their abilities, whereas low-*n* Ach persons would rather not have information about their abilities (since they have already decided that they are low) and, instead, select tasks that will tell them something about their environment.

The theoretical relationship between high- and low-*n* Ach styles and their task preferences in terms of risk levels is depicted in Figure 5-3. Note that the high-*n* Ach person is attracted to tasks in which he has a middling chance for success, whereas the low-*n* Ach person is attracted to tasks in which he has a very high or a very low chance for success.

Heinz Heckhausen (1968) and his associates have done a great deal of research with variables associated with achieving behavior. They have found that German subjects tend to score higher than Americans on *fear of failure* (FF), whereas Americans score higher on *hostile press* (HP), a tendency to locate possible sources of interference with goal-directed activity out in



**Figure 5-3.** Schematic representation of the hypothetical relationship between attractiveness and risk in tasks for an individual scoring high on measures of the need to achieve (*n* Ach) and one who has a strong motive to avoid failure, as well as a low degree of *n* Ach (after Atkinson & Feather, 1966).

the environment, rather than within oneself. FF leads to cautiousness, whereas HP leads to an aggressive stance with respect to the environment. The person high on FF is likely to be hesitant where risks are concerned, whereas high-HP individuals are likely to move aggressively against the challenges they feel are posed by the environment, and are, as a consequence, more personal-achievement oriented.

### *Measuring the need to achieve*

The psychologists who played leading roles in much of the early research relating to *n Ach* are David C. McClelland of Harvard University and John W. Atkinson of the University of Michigan. McClelland and Atkinson (1948) first observed the effects that varying degrees of food deprivation have on stories written in response to the presentation of a selection of TAT pictures. They found that subjects who had been deprived of food for 16 hours tended to introduce more food-deprivation themes into their stories than had subjects who had been deprived for only 4 hours, and the latter used more such themes than did subjects who had been deprived only one hour. The experiment thus established the fact that differences in a motivational state—hunger—will appear in fantasy material.

McClelland and Atkinson then turned to research in which *n Ach* was manipulated and the results measured by selected TAT cards. In the "relaxed" condition, male students at Wesleyan University took some mental ability tests under the direction of an experimenter who was introduced to them as a graduate student trying out some psychological measures still in a developmental state. In the "aroused" condition, the tests were administered to subjects without their being given any advance information as to why they were taking them. At the end of an initial test period they were shown how to correct the tests and calculate

their own scores. They were then directed to put their names on their booklets, together with information about secondary schools and colleges they had attended and an estimate of the level of their intelligence. The subjects were then told that the tests they had taken were measures of intelligence, administrative ability, and leadership potential and that they were given as part of a Navy research program designed to identify colleges that were most successful in producing graduates qualified to enter administrative work. The experimenter also noted that Wesleyan University students excelled on this test and then cited (fictitious) averages achieved by "typical" Wesleyan students. The norms quoted were so high that it became obvious to all subjects that they had failed badly. Additional tests were then given, and once again norms were announced that showed the subjects had failed again. The purpose of this treatment was thus to deprive the subjects of achievement, in the same way that subjects in the earlier experiment had been deprived of food.

After this phase of the experiment had been completed, subjects were asked to write brief 5-minute stories suggested by pictures that were flashed on a screen for a few seconds. All the pictures represented work situations and represented visual samples of the kinds of things the experimenters believed people would think about when the need to achieve has been aroused. Results showed that the stories written by subjects in the "aroused" condition showed significantly more achievement-oriented themes than did stories written by subjects in the "relaxed" condition. A "neutral" condition, in which the mental ability tests were given after the stories were written, produced fantasy material that was intermediate in the amount of achievement imagery displayed (McClelland, Atkinson, Clark, & Lowell, 1953). Results thus showed that achievement motivation could be manipulated

experimentally and that it could be measured by fantasy material.

A more detailed discussion of the method used in the *n* Ach research subsequently carried out by McClelland, Atkinson, and their associates may be in order. A typical picture used to elicit fantasy material depicts a boy sitting at a desk with an open book in front of him. A subject low in *n* Ach may write a story something like this:

"A boy in a classroom who is daydreaming about something. He is recalling a previously experienced incident that struck his mind to be more appealing than being in the classroom. He is thinking about the experience and is now imagining himself in the situation. He hopes to be there. He will probably get called on by the instructor to recite and will be embarrassed" (McClelland, 1961).

There is nothing in this story that indicates anything in the way of *n* Ach. In fact, there is much that is antithetical. The following story written by another subject for the same picture is quite different:

"The boy is taking an hour written. He and the others are high-school students. The test is about two-thirds over and he is doing his best to think it through. He was supposed to study for the test and did so. But because it is factual, there were items he saw but did not learn. He knows that he has studied the answers he can't remember and is trying to summon up the images and related ideas to remind him of them. He may remember one or two, but he will miss most of the items he can't remember. He will try hard until five minutes are left, then give up, go back over his paper and be disgusted for reading but not learning the answers" (McClelland, 1961).

A number of themes in this story suggest a high level of *n* Ach. The boy keeps trying

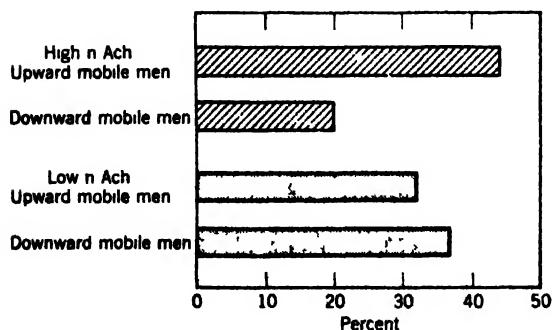
to do his best, in spite of repeated failures to remember. He takes responsibility for his performance and blames himself for his failure. The fact that the boy fails in the end is not, according to McClelland, an indication that the subject was lacking in *n* Ach. Actually, there is no difference in the outcomes of stories written by persons who are high or low in this motive. The difference lies in the greater number of achievement themes that appear in their stories.

McClelland's method of measuring *n* Ach is more complicated than the questionnaire approach used in other studies of social motives, but it has a number of points to recommend it. One of the problems with questionnaires is the possibility that the respondent will become aware or even suspicious of the intentions of the experimenter and, as a consequence, will consciously or unconsciously slant his responses accordingly. Such response bias is less likely to occur with a free-response or projective technique like the one employed by McClelland and his associates, inasmuch as the content of the picture is quite ambiguous and the subject has few clues, if any, as to what the experimenter is measuring. Another advantage of the McClelland method is that it is well suited to cross-cultural research: pictures translate more readily with less distortion of meaning than do questionnaire items. One of the significant features of the approach used by McClelland and Atkinson has been the amount of cross-cultural research it has inspired.

### *Cross-Validation of *n* Ach Research*

We have shown that the McClelland-Atkinson TAT method produced valid results in their early experiments. The question now is whether the technique can be used to measure differences in *n* Ach that occur outside the laboratory. It is common knowledge that some people characteristically achieve more

than others. Can the TAT approach produce scores that actually differentiate between achievers and nonachievers? Results for some studies indicate they do. For example, when 400 adults in upstate New York were divided at the median into high- and low-*n* Ach groups, those whose *n* Ach was high were more likely to have risen in social status during their lives, that is, they were more likely to be white-collar employees who had grown up in blue-collar families. On the other hand, persons with low *n* Ach were more likely to have remained at the same status level or to have dropped from white-collar to blue-collar status. Figure 5-4 shows the contrast between men rating high and low in *n* Ach with respect to their status mobility. The figure compares men with high *n* Ach with those with low *n* Ach and should be read as follows: 44% of the men with high *n* Ach, whose fathers were in blue-collar occupations, are now white-collar, whereas 20% of men with high *n* Ach, whose fathers were in white-collar occupations, are now blue-collar. This contrasts with 32% of men with low *n* Ach, whose fathers were in blue-collar occupations, who are now white-collar, and 37% of low *n* Ach men, whose fathers were in white-collar occupations, who are now blue-collar (Littig & Yeracaris, 1965).



**Figure 5-4.** Relationship between *n* Ach and ambition as indicated by upward mobility (Littig & Yeracaris, 1965).

If movement upward within the social order can be accepted as an indicator of *n* Ach, then the results of this study suggest that the McClelland method of measuring this motive has some degree of validity.

The tendency to remember incompleting rather than completed tasks has been termed the *Zeigarnik effect* after the German psychologist who identified and investigated the concept in 1927. It can be hypothesized that individuals scoring high on *n* Ach measures would be more responsive to the effect in achievement-oriented situations, whereas those scoring low, having a higher fear of failure, would be more likely to remember their successes—the completed tasks. Weiner, Johnson, and Mehrabian (1968) conducted an experiment testing this hypothesis by administering the McClelland-Atkinson TAT cards to male undergraduates taking a psychology course. In order to control for effects of fear of failure (FF), the investigators also administered a test of situational anxiety, the Test Attitudes Questionnaire (TAQ), the score of which was subtracted from the TAT score, to give a new achievement motivation score. The final examination for the course consisted of 58 fill-in-type or “completion” items. When each student finished his examination and turned in his paper, he was asked to take three minutes to write down as many of the test items as he could remember. Results showed that students with high achievement motivation scores remembered significantly more incompleting than completed items, than those with middle-range or low scores. The findings therefore suggest that the McClelland-Atkinson method of measuring *n* Ach is valid, particularly when FF is controlled.

In other respects, however, there appear to be problems with regard to the validity of *n* Ach measures. Malcolm S. Weinstein (1969) got very inconsistent results when he administered eight different measures of *n* Ach to some 200 male undergraduates over a four-week



period. Correlations among the measures were essentially zero, and reliability of projective measures (like the TAT) was low. His findings with respect to projective tests are rather characteristic of the experiences of other investigators with such measures (Anastasi, 1968). The fact that projective tests of *n Ach* present problems does not, however, mean that *n Ach* research should be abandoned by psychologists, according to Weinstein, but rather that it should focus more on tendencies to approach or avoid certain situations, instead of on the measurement of motivational tendencies. Nevertheless, in spite of such criticisms, investigations of *n Ach* and its correlates continue to attract extensive investments in talent and time on the part of researchers.

### *Cross-cultural studies of n Ach*

Like a good many personality variables, *n Ach* appears to stand up best in comparative studies of groups. A number of research studies show that the more authoritarian and traditional the family structure, the lower the level of *n Ach* among individuals who grow up in such an environment. An example of such a study is one done by Norman M. Bradburn (1963), who had the opportunity to administer TAT cards to groups of Turkish and American junior executives taking a course in schools of business administration in their respective countries. The difference between the two cultures is shown by the fact that the American subjects had a median *n Ach* score of 11, whereas the median for their Turkish counterparts was 6.5. Three times as many American executives as Turkish scored above the combined median. Even so, there was considerable variation among the Turkish executives. Some of them had left their families at the age of 14 to live in "village institutes," which are schools founded by the Turkish government to train teachers for the more remote areas of the coun-

try. When Turkish educational administrators were compared on *n Ach*, it was found that those who had left home to live in village institutes at the age of 14 were twice as likely to score high on *n Ach* as those who had continued to live with their parents. Somewhat similar results were obtained for business executives, those who had lost their father or had lived away from their parents before they were 18 years old were three times as likely to score high on *n Ach*.

We noted earlier that *n Ach* tends to be antithetical to *n Aff* and *n Power*. John D. W. Andrews (1967) used the McClelland-Atkinson-TAT approach with executives from two business firms located in Mexico. Firm A was an American subsidiary that had shown great progress in recent years, as indicated by higher levels of production and increases in profits. Most of its employees were Mexicans. Their opportunities for advancement were quite good because the company's operations were expanding and its policy was to fill executive positions by promoting Mexican employees, even to the extent of moving out Americans. Company P was an all-Mexican firm which was on the decline. Its head ran his firm like a feudal empire, was unpredictable, and treated his employees capriciously. Whereas promotion in Firm A was based on competence and general effectiveness, top executives in Firm P tended to promote people who would be less likely to challenge their positions. The emphasis in Firm A was on doing one's job well and on increasing production, whereas in Firm P the emphasis was on keeping one's job.

When the stories written by the two groups of executives were compared, top-level executives in Firm A scored significantly higher in *n Ach* than did comparable executives in Firm P, whereas the latter scored significantly higher in *n Power*. Differences between lower-level executives in the two firms were the opposite, but statistically these differences were small.

and barely significant. Andrews surmised that the difference between top-level and lower-level executives within the same company could be explained in terms of the climate in Firm A being favorable to achievement-oriented employees, and the climate in Firm P being favorable to power-oriented employees. This hypothesis was borne out by his finding that *n* Ach scores correlated positively and significantly with job level and promotion in Firm A, but that *n* Power correlated negatively. In Firm P, *n* Power correlated significantly with job level and promotion, but *n* Ach correlated negatively. In other words, *n* Ach, but not *n* Power, was rewarded in Firm A, and *n* Power, but not *n* Ach was rewarded in Firm P.

The effect of differing levels of *n* Ach on economic production and the course of history was studied by McClelland (1961), who under-

took a comparative study of *n* Ach and economic achievement in 39 different countries. As a measure of *n* Ach, he used the number of achievement themes appearing in elementary school readers. Criteria used to measure the level of economic achievement included per capita income (corrected for differences in foreign exchange rates) and electrical production per capita (corrected for the availability of natural resources, such as water power and coal deposits). Some of McClelland's results are presented in Table 5-3. The correlation between *n* Ach and economic achievement is a highly significant .43. In other words, in countries where children's stories showed a high degree of achievement imagery, the growth rate tended to be higher than expected, and in those countries whose story books rated low in *n* Ach, growth rate tended to be less than would ordinarily be expected.

*Table 5-3. Relationship between Need for Achievement, as Reflected by the Number of Achievement Themes in Elementary School Readers in 1950, and Economic Growth Rate, as Measured by Increases in Electric Power Production, 1952-1958 (after McClelland, 1961)*

		Economic Growth Rate	
		Low	High
Need for Achievement	High	Argentina France Ireland Tunisia Lebanon Union of South Africa Syria	Turkey Australia Spain Greece Bulgaria West Germany Portugal India Israel Pakistan Canada U. S. A. U. S. S. R.
	Low	New Zealand Hungary Sweden Netherlands Japan Chile Algeria Uruguay Norway Finland Italy Switzerland Denmark Belgium	Iraq United Kingdom Poland Austria Mexico

### Historical developments and *n Ach*

Not content with showing a relationship between *n Ach* and economic productivity in modern times, McClelland turned his analysis to the rise and fall of ancient Greece, pre-Columbian Peru, sixteenth-century Spain, and England from Tudor times to the Industrial Revolution. His measures of *n Ach* consisted of the number of achievement themes that appeared in the literature of ancient Athens, medieval Spain, and England (1550 to 1800). As measures of actual (economic) achievement he used the extent of the Athenian trade area (550 to 300 B C), shipping volume for Spain, and coal import figures for London. Achievement imagery for ancient Peru was scored according to themes appearing on funerary urns. McClelland's general finding was that high levels of *n Ach* tended to appear fifty to one hundred years before increases in economic activity took place. Figure 5-5, for example, shows how changes in levels of *n Ach*, as shown by the number of achievement themes in English literature, anticipated changes in levels of economic production by about fifty years. The bottom graph line represents the amount of achievement imagery appearing in samples of English writing at various points between 1550 and 1800. The top line represents deviations (plus or minus) from the expected volume of coal imports received at the Port of London during the indicated years.<sup>1</sup>

If the number of *n Ach* themes appearing in the literature of a country have any predictive value, there is a possibility that the growth rate in the United States may begin to lag behind that of other countries. Nancy M. Henley (1967) examined the stories appearing in the *Saturday Evening Post* between 1901 and

<sup>1</sup>Coal import figures in London at the beginning and end of the period indicated are points that can be connected by a straight line, drawn on a logarithmic scale. It is hence possible to calculate deviations from the theoretically "expected" level of imports for any given period.

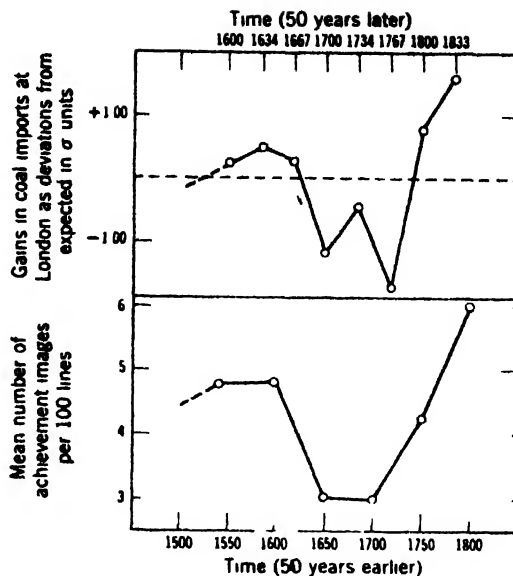


Figure 5-5. Relationship between *n Ach* and economic activity in England between 1500 and 1833 (McClelland 1961 p 139 Reproduced by permission)

1961 and found a fairly steady decline in achievement imagery, with a slight reversal during the 1950s. She concluded that *n Ach* is losing its appeal as a major value in the American culture.

### The significance of *n Ach* as a social motive

We have engaged in this extended discussion of *n Ach* for a number of reasons. First, it provides an example of how attitudes and values can serve as sources of motivation for the way in which people interact with their environment. Persons rating high on *n Ach* tend to look for problems and to try harder when they encounter frustrations and difficulties. They enjoy problem solving and are task oriented. Persons rating low in *n Ach* try to avoid problems and are easily discouraged by difficulties. They tend to regard problems primarily as annoyances and as sources of anxiety and irritation. They are likely to rate higher in *n Aff*

(the affiliation motive) than are those who score high in *n Ach*.

Second, the degree to which a person's attitudes and values are characterized by *n Ach* has a great deal to do with his interpersonal behavior. Persons scoring high on *n Ach* are more likely to perceive socializing as interfering with "getting the job done." Such a person is more likely to react to others in terms of the extent to which he sees them as helping or interfering with his achievement. In working with others, he is more likely to prefer to be independent and to avoid dependency relationships.

Third, *n Ach* is a culturally determined variable—that is, some societies or cultures foster personal achievement and place it in a central position within a complex of interrelated attitudes and values, whereas others may regard high-achievement persons with suspicion and as threats to group solidarity and loyalty. The degree to which the values of a culture are characterized by *n Ach* or *n Aff* will, of course, have an important effect on how the members of the culture perceive themselves and their environment. There is an almost infinite range of variables on which cultures differ. *N Ach* may not even be the most important source of variation, but in a world composed of societies that are achieving and affluent and those that are economically deprived, of industrialized nations and nations trying to emerge from the restraining bonds of traditionalism, national variations in *n Ach* may prove to be more significantly related to progress and economic survival than almost any other kind of difference.

## Summary

The individual's predisposition to behave in one way or another is likely to be reflected in his attitudes and other socially acquired motives. Attitudes have varying amounts of

affective, cognitive, and behavioral components and may be organized into value systems. Integrated sets of beliefs and values that justify the policies of a group or institution are termed *ideologies*. Attitudes also determine how reality is perceived. Intellectualized attitudes which do not visibly affect social behavior may be the result of a need to satisfy two or more conflicting sets of beliefs or values.

Inasmuch as attitudes cannot be directly observed, they must be inferred from behavior of some type, for example, from social behavior or from the responses to the items in a questionnaire or rating scale. The latter devices can be used to measure the direction, intensity, centrality, salience, and consistency of the attitudes in question. Attitude measures may consist of Thurstone-type scales of equal-appearing intervals, constructed of items evaluated on an eleven-point scale and then converted to a conventional "yes-no" format. Responses are then scored in accordance with the weight the judges give each item. With the Likert-type scale, respondents indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with sets of statements which have previously been analyzed in order to ensure internal consistency. Of the several other approaches to the measurement of attitudes, the free-response type has the advantage of being less biased, but is harder to score. Inasmuch as attitudes are motives, they are likely to reveal themselves in overt behavior, and psychologists have devised a number of ingenious ways (such as tallying political and tax stickers on automobiles) to gather evidence about attitudes and their correlates.

The cluster of attitudes related to authoritarian patterns of belief and behavior has been subjected to intensive and extensive analysis for the last two decades. Authoritarian or autocratic attitudes are characterized by preferences for the use of power in human relationships, whereas equalitarian or democratic attitudes are more likely to emphasize the use

of understanding and patience. Much of the research dealing with authoritarian attitudes has been initiated by a series of studies conducted at the University of California in Berkeley and published in 1950 under the title of *The authoritarian personality*. Researchers found that authoritarian attitudes tended to be associated with race prejudice, rigidity, punitiveness, and guilt and anxiety about sex. Although this research has been criticized on methodological grounds, its basic findings have proved to be valid, and one of the questionnaires used in the study, the F scale, has become the most widely used instrument for measuring authoritarian attitudes. The F scale, too, has been subjected to extensive scrutiny and criticism, but the repeated finding that its scores are positively correlated with other measures and indications of authoritarianism indicates that the scale is reasonably valid.

Behavior along authoritarian lines is likely to be characterized by closed-mindedness or dogmatism and is facilitated by a process of deindividuation, whereby the individual loses his inhibitions and feels less responsible for his behavior. Contrary to expectations, however, measures of Machiavellianism (Mach) correlate zero with the F scale. Persons scoring high on Mach scales show a superior ability to get along with others and to accomplish their goals. They are inclined to be objective and detached in ego-involving encounters with others and are, consequently, less likely to be distracted from their main goals.

Some psychological needs have significant social outcomes. The need for stimulation, for example, is associated with attentiveness in complex social situations. Maslow's psychological need system posits five levels, ranging from the basic, biological "maintenance" needs to the need for self-actualization. The needs relating to belongingness, love, and esteem are the most socialized, although social learning affects attitudes and behavior at all levels. Murray's

system of needs is more complex than that of Maslow and includes a list of twenty specific needs that may motivate people in various ways and in various situations. Needs are counterbalanced by "presses," which represent environmental forces affecting the behavior of the individual. Both needs and presses may be identified and measured by a subject's responses to a series of pictures which constitute the Thematic Apperception Test, or TAT. Of all the needs proposed by Murray, the need for achievement, or *n Ach*, has been given the greatest amount of attention by researchers. McClelland and Atkinson have used a series of pictures similar to the TAT as a way of measuring *n Ach* and have found that this measure discriminates between persons who have high levels of ambition and aspiration and those who do not. Persons scoring high in *n Ach* are likely to be minimally responsive to the need for affiliation with others, *n Aff*, or to the need to dominate and manipulate others, *n Power*. High-achieving persons are likely to be eager to attempt tasks that test their ability and are relatively undeterred by fear of failure (FF). As a consequence, they are not attracted to problems in which they have a 100% chance for success or those in which their chances are nil. Persons scoring low in *n Ach*, who also have a high FF, tend to have motives that are the opposite. They tend to attempt tasks that are very easy, because they have little confidence in themselves, or tasks with a low probability for success, because everything beyond the easiest level is a matter of chance anyway, as they see it.

Research with *n Ach* measures show that it appears to be positively related to upward social mobility, as well as to tendencies to remember incompleting (rather than completing) tasks—the Zeigarnik effect. The development of *n Ach* is adversely affected by authoritarian and traditional family structure. Surveys of achievement themes in literature,

especially in stories in elementary school readers, show a positive relationship between the numbers of such themes and the economic growth of a number of countries. This trend also appears in studies relating achievement themes occurring in literature and art to economic development in ancient Greece, pre-

Columbian Peru, medieval Spain, and England during the reigns of the Stuart and Hanoverian kings. Achievement needs play a significant part in interpersonal behavior involved in preferences for social interaction, task performance, and attitudes toward high- and low-achieving individuals.



Peggy Bliss/  
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Archives

# Chapter 6

## Social Influence

In Chapters 2–5 we have considered social behavior largely from the standpoint of the individual: why he seeks the company of others and the learning that results because of this interaction. In this chapter we turn our attention to the social environment and the forces it brings to bear on the individual in order to influence his behavior. We shall not lose sight of the individual in this discussion because we shall think of him as the focal point of these forces, but we shall be interested in considering the processes that result in social learning and that guide and direct his behavior.

### ***Social Facilitation of Performance***

We begin our discussion by observing what occurs when people perform tasks in the



presence of others. The point in the studies to be described is that the mere presence of other people is a source of influence. This influence may be the result, as we suggest in Chapter 2, of the fact that other people are a source of stimulation or even stress. Very likely the inverted-U hypothesis holds here, in that mild stress or stimulation is helpful, but that stress beyond a certain level results in a deterioration of performance. As the research reviewed by Robert B. Zajonc (1965) shows, stress can be a factor of the task as well as of the social situation. The more complex and potentially stressful the task, the less helpful the presence of others is likely to be; the simpler and less stressful the task, the more the presence of others is likely to aid performance.

### *Familiar and unfamiliar tasks*

The first group of studies reviewed by Zajonc deals with the facilitation of performance. In one of these studies, National Guard trainees were required to spend  $2\frac{1}{4}$  hours monitoring a circle of twenty red lamps that were lighted serially in a clockwise sequence, twelve sequences per minute. On the average of once every  $2\frac{1}{2}$  minutes, one of the lights failed to come on in its proper sequence. The subject's task was to signal when this occurred. Subjects in the control group carried out this monotonous task alone, whereas subjects in the experimental group were told that from time to time a lieutenant colonel or a master sergeant would enter their booth to observe their performance. These visits actually took place at approximately half-hour intervals. Results showed that subjects who were visited by a superior were far more accurate than those who worked alone. During the latter part of the experiment, the supervised subjects missed noting only 20% of the times a lamp failed to light, whereas those who were never visited missed 64% of the lamp failures (Bergum & Lehr, 1963).

Other studies reviewed by Zajonc, however,

showed that the presence of others did not facilitate responses, but, instead, led to a deterioration of performance. In another experiment, subjects were seated in a chair, attached to electrodes, told not to smoke or vocalize in any way, and left alone. They then received a half-second of electric shock every 10 seconds. On the table before them was a red button. Most subjects discovered that pressing the button delayed the onset of a shock by 10 seconds; hence, pressing the button at frequent intervals effectively eliminated the possibility of shock. It took the average subject about  $11\frac{1}{2}$  minutes to learn this. When subjects were tested in pairs, however, only two pairs out of the twelve tested were able to learn the relationship between button pressing and relief from being shocked, and those two required 47 minutes and 69 minutes, respectively. The other pairs never did learn (Ader & Tatum, 1963).

A similar effect can be observed with animals. When cockroaches ran mazes in the presence of other cockroaches their performance was not as good as when they ran them alone. On the other hand, performance of cockroaches on a straight runway was enhanced in the company of other cockroaches over what it was when they were tested alone (Zajonc, Heingartner, & Herman, 1962).

Zajonc's explanation for the two different kinds of effects is that the presence of others tends to have a facilitating effect if the subject's responses are part of a well-learned repertoire, whereas their presence has an interfering effect if the responses are novel and have to be learned. If a task is familiar to the point of being banal and monotonous, the presence of others will be welcomed. The National Guardsmen probably looked forward to the occasional visits of a superior in the course of their extremely dull task of monitoring the circle of lamps. But the presence of others when we are coping with an unfamiliar, complex task introduces an additional and distracting element. Running mazes

is an unfamiliar task for a cockroach, and the presence of another cockroach only adds to the confusion. Scuttling down a runway is a more familiar activity, and the presence of another cockroach enhances the performance.

Subjects learning a complex skill before an audience made more errors, in one study, than did subjects who learned the skill in the presence of the experimenter. Once the skill had been learned, however, subjects performing before an audience did better than those who were observed by the experimenter alone. The fact that the audience did indeed have an arousal effect was confirmed by palmar sweat prints, a physiological measure of arousal under stress conditions (Martens, 1969).

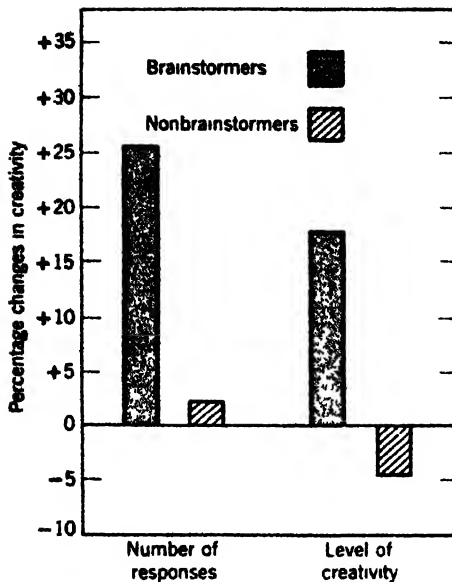
### *Brainstorming experiments*

Research using a device termed *brainstorming* shows how interactions with others has a facilitating effect on performance. Brainstorming is the name given by Alex F. Osborn (1957), an advertising man, to the activity of a group of individuals who, charged with solving a problem, get together and invent as many solutions as they can. Participants are told "the wilder the better," are instructed to refrain from criticizing others' solutions, and are urged to build and improvise on the solutions proposed by others. The situation is, therefore, calculated to produce a high degree of stimulating interaction. Osborn claimed that "the average person can think up twice as many ideas when working with a group than when working alone." However, if Zajonc's analysis of the conditions under which the presence of others facilitates or inhibits performance is valid, we would expect participants in brainstorming to be more productive when working alone, because the invention of new solutions is a fairly unfamiliar task, and the presence of others would hamper, rather than facilitate, learning. At least two research studies, one by Taylor, Berry, and Block (1958), and the other by Dunnette, Camp-

bell, and Jaastad (1963), arrived at results consistent with Zajonc's conclusions. The latter study, however, produced an additional finding that may be of interest here. In this study, half the group worked alone before they participated in brainstorming, and the other half brainstormed before they worked alone. In both instances working alone was a more productive condition than was brainstorming, but those who worked alone *after* they had brainstormed were more productive than those who worked alone beforehand. The results thus suggest that brainstorming may have had some kind of facilitative after-effect on innovation.

This possibility was investigated by Lindgren and Lindgren (1965a,b), who found that the performance of persons writing cartoon captions improved after they had participated in a brainstorming session. The improvement was particularly noticeable in the degree of creativity shown by the captions. Subjects who were given the task of writing captions were told to write as many as they could and to make them as interesting or humorous as possible. They were then assigned to brainstorming groups of four or five individuals and told to develop captions for a second cartoon as a group, not to criticize one another's ideas, and to use one another's ideas as much as possible. After brainstorming, they were given a third cartoon, with instructions as during the first trial. Subjects in a control group worked alone during all three phases of the experiment. The effect of brainstorming was measured by comparing the number of responses and the level of creativity attained during the third phase of the experiment (after brainstorming) with that attained during the first phase. As the graph in Figure 6-1 shows, the performance of the experimental group improved during the third phase, whereas that of the control group did not.

It should be noted that producing captions is a task that has some degree of familiarity, that is, it involves expressing oneself in writing, a type of behavior that the subjects tested (all



**Figure 6-1.** Percentage changes in creativity between the first and third phases of a writing task for subjects who participated in group brainstorming in the second phase and those who did not (Lindgren & Lindgren, 1965b).

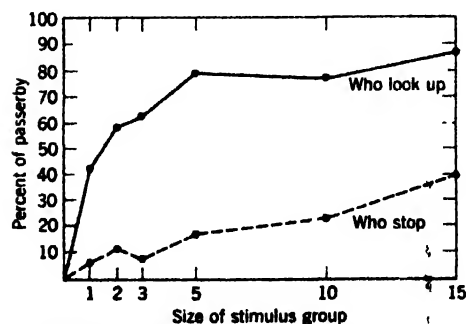
college students) had mastered to some degree. When a similar experiment was attempted with drawing or sketching, a mode of expression that most students have not mastered, somewhat different results obtained. There was a gain in the level of creativity expressed by drawings after brainstorming, but it was not significantly different from that shown by a control group who had filled out a questionnaire instead of participating in brainstorming (Lindgren, 1967).

### ***Influence on Perception and Cognition through Social Norms***

In the foregoing chapters we have stated in various ways that the individual looks to others for cues that enable him to structure and organize his environment and give it meaning. It is from

these cues that he learns the attitudes, beliefs, and values that he uses as a guide for future action. Although this process is more active during the so-called "formative years," it continues throughout the life span. Our responsiveness to one another's cues is the basis for group patternings of behavior in terms of what are called *social norms* (or, conventionally, merely *norms*). Social norms apply to motives as well as to behavior and constitute the structure of the enduring consensual way of life we term *culture*, as well as more temporary phenomena, like *fads*.

We are so sensitized to respond to one another's behavior that it takes very little to set a norm in operation. In one study, psychologists used varying numbers of accomplices, ranging from a single person to a group of fifteen, to gather on a New York City sidewalk and stare at a sixth-floor window. This behavior on the part of the accomplices cued a predictable response on the part of passersby. As Figure 6-2 indicates, the stimulus of even one accomplice stopping and looking was enough to get 40% of the passersby to look up, and about 5% even stopped. The percentage who looked up rose rapidly as the size of the stimulus group increased, leveling off to 75



**Figure 6-2.** Mean percentages of passersby on the busy New York City street who look up and who stop, with respect to the size of the stimulus group. (Milgram, Bickman, & Berkowitz, 1969. Reprinted by permission. Copyright © 1969 by the American Psychological Association.)

or 80% for stimulus groups of five or more, but the proportion of passersby who stopped increased steadily to over 30% for stimulus groups of fifteen (Milgram, Bickman, & Berkowitz, 1969). What we have here is a kind of social learning or modeling. We are so conditioned to use the behavior of others as models for our own responses to various situations that we spontaneously imitate their behavior, often without being aware that we are doing so.

This tendency is especially strong in ambiguous or novel situations. At such times, group members almost automatically turn to one another for help in determining the meaning of the array of stimuli they collectively face, and the member who takes the initiative, usually one who is more dominant, is likely to set the pattern for the others' behavior. It is this kind of situation that serves as the framework for the experiments of Muzafer Sherif that we will examine in the first part of this section.

Suppose, however, that the stimulus is not at all ambiguous and that most of the group members are confederates of the investigator, who has coached them to give wrong answers. In this instance, two kinds of learning are in conflict: the perceptual patterns we have learned through a lifetime of experience and our equally lifelong habit of using the percepts of others as guides to the apprehension of reality. The question now is, which will take priority: the individual member's own perception of reality, or the patently incorrect and indefensible position taken by the group majority? This is the question examined by the studies reviewed in the second part of this section. Both types of study are important, because each sheds light on the process whereby attitudes, beliefs, and values are developed.

### *The development of social norms*

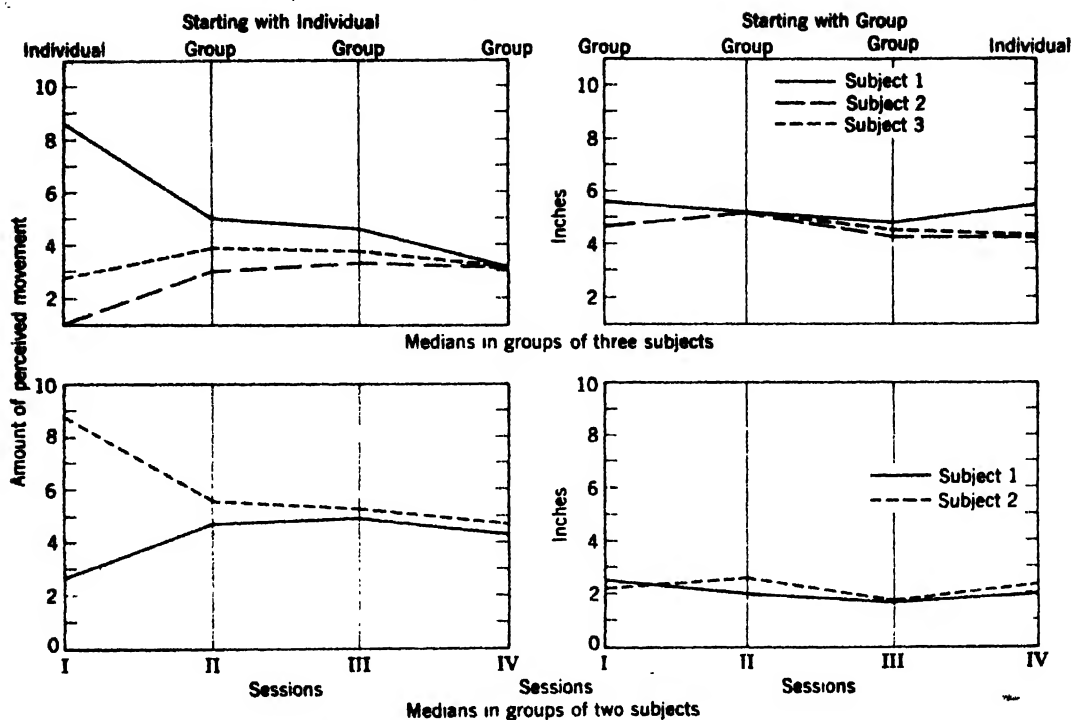
In the study conducted by Muzafer Sherif (1936), a classic in social psychology, subjects were ushered into a room and seated at a table

on which a telegraph key had been placed. They were instructed that after the room had been darkened a light would appear. They were to press the key as soon as the light started to move, whereupon they were asked to say how far it had moved from its original position. Actually, the light did not move at all, but all the subjects *perceived* movement, a phenomenon that Sherif termed *autokinetic effect*. Subjects were tested individually and in groups, and it is the "group effect" that interests us here.

Figure 6-3 shows what happened when subjects were first tested alone, in contrast to when they started their testing in groups of two or three. In the left-hand charts, individual variation in the "alone" condition becomes "funneled" under the impact of the social norm. In the right-hand charts, the norm takes effect immediately and even persists in the "alone" condition, when the individual subjects are no longer in a group context. What emerges in the group settings is a kind of tacit agreement that the expressed judgments of members of the group should be more or less consistent, one with the other. Sherif calls this mutually dependent agreement to control behavior a *social norm*.<sup>1</sup> Note that subjects who start out in groups develop a norm rather quickly and that this norm continues to affect their judgment even after they leave the group and are working independently on the final set of trials. Incidentally, Sherif found that the majority of the subjects seemed to be unaware that their judgments were affected by those of the other group members—that is, they were not aware that they were reporting the consensus of the group and thought that the judgments they were making were their own.

Sherif's study illustrates a number of impor-

<sup>1</sup>In a more recent statement, Sherif (1970) defined a social norm as "an evaluative scale designating an acceptable latitude and an objectional latitude for behavior, activity, beliefs, or any object of concern to the group" [p. 148].



**Figure 6-3.** Estimates of the "movement" of a light (autokinetic effect) when individuals are alone or in groups. (After Sherif & Sherif, 1969, pp. 208-209. Copyright © 1969 by Harper & Row. Reproduced by permission.)

tant principles. First, it shows that individuals faced by an ambiguous situation are inclined to depend on one another for clues or suggestions about the course of action to take. Second, it shows that group consensus has an effect that carries over to behavior outside the context of the group. Third, it suggests that this process usually goes on without our being aware of it.

Sherif's study attracted a great deal of interest from social psychologists of the day, because it offered a neat explanation of the dynamics of social norms, at least as far as ambiguous situations were concerned. The study left unanswered, however, the question of whether the same effect would obtain in less ambiguous situations. Supposing subjects were asked to judge situations that had a degree of



objective reality about them—would the same effects obtain? Would individuals respond to others' norms or to the evidence of their own eyes? Or, put in social learning terms: would individuals use the false judgments of others as models for their own?

### *Studies of yielding to social pressure (Asch)*

A second series of classic experiments was needed to provide the answers to these questions. This research was conducted by Solomon E. Asch (1956) during the late 1940's and early 1950's. The basic idea in the experiments was to place a naive subject in a group that had been instructed to give incorrect judgments at predetermined points in the proceedings.

In the Asch studies, subjects are seated in a rough semicircle, facing an easel on which the experimenter places a pair of large cards. The left-hand card bears a single vertical line, and the right-hand card displays three vertical lines of varying lengths, numbered "1," "2," and "3." The members of the group are asked to say which one of the three lines is equal in length to the line on the card at the left and to call out its number. The first trial presents no difficulty: the comparison line is 10 inches and lines 1, 2, and 3 are  $8\frac{3}{4}$ , 10, and 8 inches, respectively. One by one the members of the group call out "Number 2." Nor is there difficulty with the second trial. On the third trial, the comparison line is 3 inches, and lines 1, 2, and 3 are  $3\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $4\frac{1}{4}$ , and 3 inches, respectively. Line No. 3 is obviously the correct answer, but the first person in the group says "Number 1." So does the second person, the third, and so on down the line. Supposing you are the eighth person in a group of nine, what would you say? You can see that the correct answer is "Number 3," but everyone so far has said "Number 1." You have the choice of agreeing with the majority and reporting an answer you can see is wrong, or standing up to the group and reporting what you know is

right. The question is, Which will win out—group pressure or objectivity?

The results showed that only 26% of the subjects were able to resist the false norm on every trial. The experiment consisted of eighteen trials, during which the majority gave the wrong answer twelve times. The amount of yielding to the false norm produced a trimodal distribution, with about a fourth of the subjects not yielding at all; about half yielding an average of three times each, or on 25% of the trials; and a final fourth yielding an average of approximately nine times each, or on 75% of the trials (See Table 6-1).

*Table 6-1. Percentage of Subjects in Experimental and Control Situations Giving Incorrect Judgments Regarding the Comparative Length of Lines (Asch, 1958)<sup>a</sup>*

Number of critical errors <sup>b</sup>	Percentage of subjects making errors	
	Experimental situation	Control situation
0	26	94
1	8	3
2	10	3
3	12	0
4	6	0
5	8	0
6	2	0
7	4	0
8	10	0
9	6	0
10	6	0
11	2	0
12	0	0
	100	100

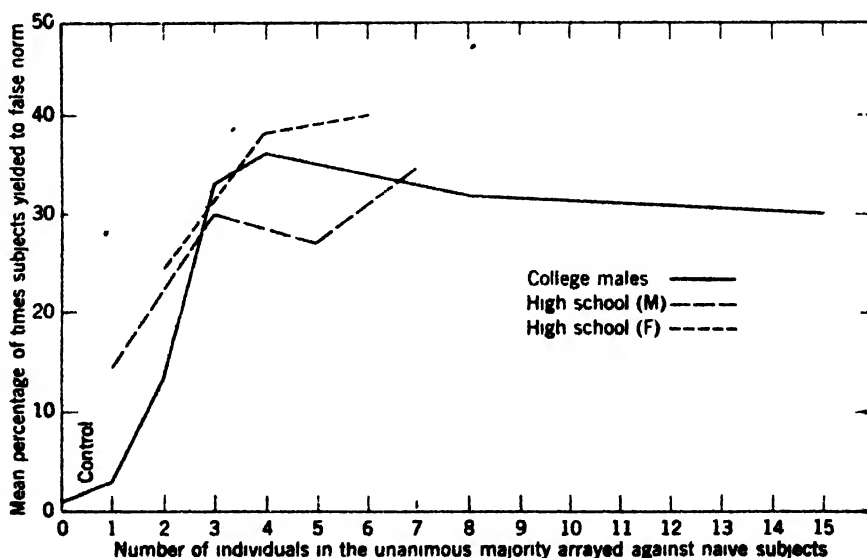
<sup>a</sup>Fifty experimental subjects were exposed to unanimous incorrect judgments 12 times out of a total of 18 trials; 37 control subjects made their judgments without such pressure.

<sup>b</sup>"Critical errors" refers to the 12 occasions when the unanimous majority made incorrect judgments.

Although the results reported in Table 6-1 are based on an experimental situation in which one naive subject is confronted by a unanimous majority of eight, Asch found that a majority of three arrayed against one was equally effective in producing conformity to the false norm. These findings have been questioned by Gerard, Wilhelmy, and Conolley (1968), who exposed naive subjects to the Asch situation in groups of varying sizes up to eight (one naive subject and seven accomplices). Their results suggest that there is a continual upward progression of conformity with increasing group size. Their findings, together with those of Asch, are depicted in Figure 6-4. There are some differences in the two experiments, however. Asch's subjects were college males, whereas the Gerard et al. subjects were high school students of both sexes. Asch's subjects also were in a face-to-face group situation, whereas Gerard et al. tested their subjects in cubicles and communicated with them through

earphones. The fact that their group size was limited to eight also tells us nothing with respect to the upward limit at which increases in group size have a leveling-off effect. In the main, however, the percentages of agreement with the false norms are remarkably close to those reported by Asch, particularly for the male high school students.

The important point here is that it takes only a few individuals to set a norm and thus influence behavior. In one field experiment, two pickets, who were bearing signs reading "Toy Guns Today Mean Real Guns Tomorrow," paraded in front of a department store during alternate mornings the week before Christmas. During the mornings that pickets were present, only 8% of the customers buying toys purchased toy guns, in contrast to other mornings, when almost 15% bought toy guns (Lupfer, Kay, & Burnette, 1969). The two pickets had the impact of a two-to-one majority on the individual toy buyer, thus producing an



**Figure 6-4.** Percentages of individual college and high school students agreeing with the false judgments of a unanimous majority, as a function of the size of the group arrayed against them (Asch, 1958; Gerard, Wilhelmy, & Conolley, 1968).

effect which probably led to the 50% reduction in purchase of toy guns.

The effect of coalitions against the majority was also studied by Asch. In one set of experiments, one member of the group of accomplices was instructed to give the correct answer during the first half of the critical items and then join the majority on the balance of items. When this occurred, the naive subjects' mean error rate jumped from 5.5% for the first half to 28.5%. The presence of a partner, in other words, was found to be extremely reassuring, but the tendency to defy the majority did not carry over after the partner had joined the majority. Under the opposite condition, when a member of the unanimous majority broke away from the group and started giving accurate judgments halfway through the experiment, the support of a confederate also had a reassuring effect so that the number of errors dropped to 8.7% as contrasted with 32% in experiments using a unanimous majority. In another version, the naive subjects were each given a "partner" who gave accurate judgments throughout the series. Under this condition, the error percentage dropped to 5.5%. In still another version, the number of naive subjects was increased to two, and the percentage of errors was 10.4, or about one-third that of the standard situation. It is clear that the presence of a partner strengthens the will to resist the majority, but does not entirely eliminate the effects of group pressure.

Interviews conducted with naive subjects after the experiment showed that those who had yielded at least half the time were mostly unaware that they were being hoodwinked. Most of the yielders were aware that their perceptions were different from those of the majority but concluded that the majority was probably right. Some of the yielders were not aware that their perceptions differed from the majority—they merely perceived what the majority reported. A minority of yielders were

aware that their perceptions were different, felt that the majority was wrong, but decided to go along with the group in order not to appear different.

What we have in the Asch situation is an example, on a small scale, of social learning. The behavior—in this instance, the judgment—of the subject is being altered by the group. During the period of the experiment the yielding subject learns either not to trust his own judgment or not to have any judgment at all but to take his cues from the group and use their behavior as a model. The subject's behavior is reinforced or rewarded by his feeling of being "with" the group. Since this is merely an *ad hoc* group, assembled for purposes of the experiment, there is no real advantage to being accepted by the group, because deviation carries no penalty. There is no doubt, however, that other learnings intervene here: deviation is avoided because the subject has learned in other contexts that deviation will be followed in most groups by loss of acceptance and even exclusion. The fact that some subjects were able to resist group influence is beside the point. The point is that a majority of the subjects were affected by the massed group opinion at one point or another and thus learned to imitate the behavior of other members of the group. The Asch experiment thus shows, in a very succinct and effective way, how effective groups are as agents of learning and how much leverage they can exert on behavior.

A number of questions arise from a review of the Asch research. First, can subjects be made to alter their judgment on other types of material? After all, judging the length of lines is a rather artificial situation. What about opinions and attitudes? Second, how much modifying effect would the group have had on the judgment of the individual if he had known or suspected that the experiment had been rigged? Third, how lasting are the effects of the experimental treatment? If a person is led



to utter a judgment contrary to his beliefs or to objective evidence, will he then hold to that opinion afterward?

### *Studies of yielding to social pressure: The IPAR experiments*

To answer these questions, we turn to a series of experiments that use somewhat different techniques in creating the same effect achieved by Asch. At the Institute for Personality Assessment and Research (IPAR) in Berkeley, Richard S. Crutchfield (1955) developed a variation of the Asch situation that eliminated the need for confederates and enabled him and his associates to test the effect of social pressure on a number of subjects simultaneously. In this variation five naive subjects are seated in adjoining booths so that none of them can be seen by any of the others but all may see slides projected on the screen in front of the group. Each booth has an array of numbered switches whereby the subject can communicate his judgment of the material on the screen. A series of lights in each booth presumably indicates the judgments being given by the other four subjects. Actually, the signal lights are instead controlled by the experimenter, who is thus able to manipulate the experimental situation and communicate any degree of consensus he wishes. Since each booth is labeled E, each subject believes he is the last to report after subjects A, B, C, and D. Crutchfield's method not only makes it possible to test a much larger group of subjects in a shorter time than would be possible with the Asch situation, but also permits the use of a wider variety of materials. The results are very much the same, however. For example, the statement "I believe we are made better by the trials and hardships of life" evoked virtually no disagreement on the part of members of a control group, but when subjects in an experimental group were informed of a group consensus in disagreement, 31% of them expressed disagreement. In one control

sample of males, no one agreed with the statement "I doubt whether I would make a good leader," but when members of an experimental group were told of a consensus in agreement, 37% also agreed.

The ease with which attitudes could be manipulated was demonstrated by two items. Among control subjects, only 19% agreed with the statement "Free speech being a privilege rather than a right, it is proper for a society to suspend free speech whenever it feels itself threatened." But when experimental subjects believed that the other members of the group were unanimous in accepting the statement, 58% endorsed it as well.

The second item was in the form of a multiple-choice question: "Which one of the following do you feel is the most important problem facing our country today?" The five alternatives were:

- A. Economic recession.
- B. Educational facilities.
- C. Subversive activities.
- D. Mental health.
- E. Crime and corruption.

Only 12% of control subjects named C, "subversive activities," as the most important problem, but under pressure of reported group consensus, 48% of the experimental subjects selected this option.

Crutchfield's work does give us an answer to the first question we raised, for it shows that attitudes, even self-regarding attitudes, can be changed under group pressure.

The second question dealt with the effect of group pressure on subjects who knew or suspected that the experimental situation had been rigged in some way. In one experiment using the equipment designed by Crutchfield, thirty female subjects, out of a total of 150, indicated that they knew the apparatus was rigged. When the conformity scores of these thirty "sophisticated" subjects were compared to those of the

120 deceived subjects, the latter were found to have conformed about twice as much as the former—26%, as contrasted with 12%. This difference is in the expected direction; we would assume that subjects who were aware that they were being manipulated would be less likely to conform more than those unaware. But why should the sophisticated subjects conform at all, if they were aware of what was being done? The answers of the subjects provide some clues to what was happening. Some were not sure of their suspicions. For example, "I fluctuated . . . between believing the people were planted and believing them simply non-prejudiced subjects like myself." Others were bothered by how their responses would appear. "Even though I was very suspicious of the experiment, I was still bothered by being different." Some found it easier to fall in line with the majority, and others felt that they were being cooperative (Allen, 1966). Whatever the reasons given, however, the realization that one's judgment is being manipulated evidently is not insurance against being persuaded against one's better judgment.

The third question we raised, and perhaps the most significant one, is whether there is any lasting effect of changes in judgment or attitude brought about by social pressure. One study of group pressure at IPAR using the Crutchfield technique showed that approximately half of the original group-pressure effect remained after a period of several weeks, although there was large individual variation (Krech, Crutchfield, & Ballachey, 1962). A study by Norman Endler (1966), using the Crutchfield situation, also showed some after-effect. Subjects were shown thirty-six slides of multiple-choice items. They were subjected to social pressure on eight verbal items (geometric figures). The mean conformity score was 6.35, which contrasts with the mean score made by a control group (not subject to pressure) of 2.3. Since the latter score was achieved by chance alone, the effect

of the social pressure on the experimental group can be expressed by a net mean score of 4.05. When the groups were run through the series of slides again without any social pressure, the net score was still 1.15 higher than the control group. In other words, about one-third of the effect remained. Some subjects in the same experiment also were reinforced by the experimenter's informing them, after they had responded, which items were "right." These subjects not only conformed a great deal more than those who were told only the group norm, but they also showed significantly greater after-effect.

Although this area has not been extensively researched, the available data suggest that there can be a lingering after-effect. In real life, of course, the effect would vary with the significance of the attitude being placed under group pressure, the amount of pressure applied, and the value of the group to the individual. Some of these variables were included in an experiment by Robert S. Wyer, Jr. (1966), who found that subjects were more likely to conform to bogus group estimates of the number of dots on a projected slide when they were told that the task was important, but this effect did not hold when they were not attracted to other members of the group being tested or did not feel accepted by them.

### *Attitudes associated with yielding behavior*

So far we have said nothing about the kind of people who are inclined to yield to or resist group influence. Crutchfield (1955) reported that the F scale correlated +.39 with conformity as measured by his version of the Asch situation. He also found that ratings of authoritarianism, assigned by members of his research staff who observed subjects playing roles in psychodramatic situations, correlated +.35 with conformity. A similar relationship

was also found by Wells, Weinert, and Rubel (1956), who used an Asch-type situation in which students were asked to say which driver was at fault in a picture of an automobile collision. Sixty out of sixty-two members of a control group said that Driver A was at fault, because he had obviously gone through a red traffic light. In an experimental group of sixty-two, however, twenty-one yielded to the false norm and blamed Driver B. The mean score per F-scale item for the yielders was 4.0, whereas it was 3.1 for those who resisted. The results rather clearly show that yielding was associated with authoritarian tendencies.

Further clues as to the kinds of people who resist or yield in social pressure experiments are provided by Crutchfield (1955), whose co-workers at IPAR analyzed the two kinds of subjects without reference to their performance in the stress situation. When their evaluations were matched with the scores of subjects who were high or low yielders, the pattern reported in Table 6-2 emerged. Because the yielders also tended to have high F-scale scores, it appears that both yielding and authoritarianism are associated with the kinds of behavior listed in the bottom half of the table. Both resistance to pressure and low F scores are associated with behavior described in the top half of the table.

Allen and Levine (1971) have conducted a series of experiments with the Crutchfield apparatus in order to explore some of the reasons underlying resistance to and acceptance of group norms. One of the manipulations was the use of a nearsighted accomplice who claimed he was virtually blind but who continued to report correct judgments, contrary to the false norm statements of the rest of the accomplices. The support of this nearly blind colleague was not reassuring to the naive subjects, who were encouraged to resist the norm only when the confirming reports came from an apparently competent group member. Allen and Levine concluded, therefore, that the

*Table 6-2. Differences between Men Exhibiting Extremes of Independence or Conformity in Resisting False Norms (Crutchfield, 1955)*

*The resisters were seen as:*

1. Showing effectiveness in leadership.
2. Taking an ascendant or dominant role in relations with others.
3. Being persuasive in winning others over to their point of view.
4. Used frequently by others as sources of advice and reassurance.
5. Capable and efficient.
6. Active, vigorous, and energetic.
7. Expressive and enthusiastic.
8. Seeking and enjoying aesthetic and sensuous experiences.
9. Being natural, unaffected, and free from pretense.
10. Self-reliant, able to do their own thinking, and independent in judgment.

*The yielders were seen as:*

1. Submissive, compliant, and overly accepting of authority figures.
2. Conforming, limiting their behavior to that which has been prescribed.
3. Operating within a narrow range of interests.
4. Showing a very high degree of impulse control, inhibited, tending to delay or deny gratification needlessly.
5. Vacillating, unable to make decisions without great delay.
6. Becoming confused, disorganized, and nonadaptive under stress.
7. Lacking insight into their own motives or behavior.
8. Highly suggestible and overly responsive to the evaluations of others.

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\*Appraisals were made by staff members of the Institute for Personality Assessment and Research [IPAR] at the University of California in Berkeley.

important factor in resistance to the group was not the breaking of the group's consensus *per se*, nor the fact that the naive subject had become less socially isolated from the group, but rather that the "partner" provided an independent assessment of reality. They further concluded that people conform to majorities in groups in experimental tasks of this sort because they have learned to depend on the group for their assessment of reality. In other words, it is competence the naive subjects are looking for, not group fellowship.

In the preliminary statement about this section we noted that the influence studies shed light on the formation of attitudes, beliefs, and values. It should be recognized, of course, that the experiments reviewed here involved miniature segments of experience. It is doubtful whether any of them would lead to any permanent distortion of judgment, for as individuals who have been influenced encounter objective evidence that disproves the false information they learned under group pressure, the effects of the experience should be extinguished in time. If the presentation of the false norms were to occur repetitively, however, as in everyday experience, one result might be a set of attitudes and beliefs based on group consensus, rather than on objective reality. Many examples of normative beliefs existing in the face of objective evidence to the contrary may be found in the annals of history. One example is the Romans' belief in the divinity of the emperor, a belief that often withstood the test of the emperor's death. Such beliefs are not mere happenstances, but grow out of some need of the group—in this instance, the need for a politically unifying symbol.

### *Social Influence and Altruism*

A society that is based solely on self-centered considerations cannot function. There must be

some concern for others' needs if there is to be any continuing collaboration of the type that makes for social coherence and continuity. There is some evidence that altruistic drives are inborn; D. O. Hebb (1971) has reported other-oriented behavior among infrahuman animals. His conclusions would be supported on a common-sense level by dog-owners and others who are fond of animals. Dennis Krebs (1970, 1971), however, takes a more skeptical view. Protective behavior on the part of a human or an animal with respect to another is *cooperative*, rather than altruistic, according to Krebs, because such behavior is likely to help both the protector and the protected. Krebs also notes that empathy—the awareness of another's feeling state—may also be a factor in behavior that seems altruistic, in that the empathic individual (or animal) experiences the joys and sorrows of another vicariously. Hence, the empathizing individual may seek to do things to increase the joy and reduce the sorrow of others and thus reap the benefits of his own actions, albeit vicariously.

Most of the research in this field of behavioral science has not concerned itself with the question of whether altruism exists, but has focused on what investigators have termed "prosocial behavior," "helping," "volunteering," "gift-giving," and "sharing." All of these forms of behavior may *imply* self-sacrificial or other-directed behavior, Krebs points out, but they do not *establish* that such motives are, in fact, present. In other words, unless we can show that there is a basic motive structure common to all of them, we must question whether altruism exists at all.

In Chapter 2 we mentioned a study by Weiss et al. (1971), who found that subjects could be conditioned to learn a task, the reward for which was solely that of relieving the suffering of another individual. The investigators interpreted their findings as compatible with a number of explanations of altruistic behavior,

including a theory that it is an innate drive. Such an interpretation would undoubtedly be rejected by skeptics like Krebs, on the grounds that other interpretations are not ruled out. We must therefore conclude that the research that would satisfy the skeptics that altruism does exist has not yet been done. Until it is done, it is reasonable to accept the fact that altruism is recognized in some way or other by individuals of all cultures, and that it is generally regarded as a trait favorable to the coherence and continuity of social groups and society in general. In this section, therefore, we shall follow the lead of other behavioral scientists and focus on forms of behavior that are usually considered to be altruistic, behavior that leads us to think of others as possessing the trait of altruism to a greater or lesser degree.

Much of the recent interest in altruism stems from an incident that occurred about ten years ago, when a young woman, Kitty Genovese, was stabbed to death in the middle of the night in a residential area of New York City. Even though the murderer took a half-hour to kill her, and some 38 apartment dwellers witnessed the crime, no one made any attempt to call the police. The incident became a *cause célèbre* and was used as basis for editorial condemnations of modern urban life as alienating, dehumanizing, and corrupting, leading to anomie, existential despair, and moral degradation. This interpretation of the Genovese affair was challenged by two psychologists, John Darley and Bibb Latané (1968), who conducted an experiment showing that the incident could be explained in terms of diffusion of responsibility among the members of the "audience," as it were.

In the Darley-Latané experiment, subjects were assigned to cubicles to participate (via microphone) in what they thought was to be a group discussion of personal problems associated with the stresses of college life. They then heard one of the members call for help

and go into what was apparently an epileptic seizure. (The entire discussion, except for the naive subject's part, had been prerecorded on tape, of course). When a subject thought that only he and the epileptic were involved in the discussion, he was highly likely to seek help. Indeed, 85% of the subjects in this condition responded and within 52 seconds, on the average. In a condition in which each subject thought he was one of a group of three, however, only 62% responded and with a mean time of 93 seconds. Simulated groups of six reduced the proportion of helping responses to 31% and the time taken to respond to 166 seconds. Irrespective of whether the subjects sought help or not, they showed every evidence of being upset, however.

Darley and Latané speculated that their results might have turned out differently if the participants had been members of a real face-to-face group. An experiment incorporating this type of condition, and set in a "real-life" framework, was conducted by Piliavin, Rodin, and Piliavin (1969), who used teams of students to enact incidents in New York subway trains. Teams consisted of a victim, a model, and two observers. Black or white victims staged collapses, pretending they were either drunk or ill and carrying a cane. In some trials, the model waited 70 seconds to see if the other passengers would help the victim; in other trials, he waited 150 seconds. The amount of help volunteered by the passengers was impressive. The fact that an average of fifty passengers were standing in the immediate area was no deterrent. There was no diffusion of responsibility, for the victim with the cane was helped in 62 out of 65 trials, even before the model could intervene, and the black victim was helped as readily as the white. Even the drunken victim was helped spontaneously in half the trials, although the black drunk was helped less often than the white. Although 60% of the passengers, on the average, were males, 90% of the helpers were males. There

was a tendency for whites to help white victims, and blacks to help black victims, but the differences were not significant.

The investigators explained the differences between their findings and those of Darley and Latané (1968) in terms of the differences between the two situations. In the subway experiment, bystanders could see the victim, as well as one another. Diffusion of responsibility, if it occurs at all in such a situation, is minimal, because the costs of helping (effort, possible embarrassment, possible physical harm, etc.) are less than the costs of not helping (self-blame, guilt, and the possible censure of other onlookers). The investigators pointed out, too, that it is not necessary to introduce the idea of altruism to explain the results, because the behavior of the helpers can be interpreted as "a selfish desire to rid oneself of an unpleasant emotional state" [p. 298], that is, unpleasant in terms of having to view the discomfiture of another.

The results of the two studies can also be explained in terms of norms that are specific to different situations. In the Darley-Latané experiment, there is a latent norm that leads to helping behavior when the subject believes he is alone with the victim. The victim evidently expects help, and the subject expects himself to provide help. When the potential helpers are multiple, the subject is confused, because he does not know whether the norm applies to him or to some other member who is more qualified, psychologically or otherwise. In a replication of the Darley-Latané experiment, Schwartz and Clausen (1970) found that helpers tended to have more social status, were taller, and were inclined to express more liking for the victim than nonhelpers. In other words, they were more appropriate in terms of role specifications. In the subway study, men were more likely to help, because the social norms call for men to take the initiative in helping in public emergencies.

The strength of this latter norm was also confirmed in another field study in which a young black or white female staged an emergency in which a bag she was carrying out of a supermarket broke open, causing her purchases to fall on the ground. In this situation, women were somewhat less willing to help than men were (Wispé & Freshley, 1971).

Irrespective of whether altruism is innate or not, social learning has a major effect on the extent to which altruistic behavior will be displayed, as well as on the circumstances under which it will occur. It is, of course, during childhood that the relevant values and attitudes are learned. The formation of these normative motives has been studied by a number of researchers, including Ervin Staub (1971a), who used a modification of the Darley-Latané design, in which individual children of kindergarten age heard sounds of another child in distress who was apparently located in a nearby room. In one study, prior interaction with a nurturant, friendly adult increased kindergarteners' helping behavior. Helping was also facilitated when an adult model had previously given attention to the "child next door," thus providing behavior model for the subject.

In another study, Staub (1971b) had kindergarteners "role-play" situations in which pairs of children helped each other. The children engaged (or did not engage) in question-and-answer interchange with the experimenter, in which she described and discussed proper types of helping behavior. The subjects subsequently found themselves hearing the cries for help in the kind of emergency situation described above. The children were then rewarded for their participation in the research with candies, whereupon they were told they could leave some of the candy for a poor child who would be getting nothing for his birthday, because his parents were sick and could not afford anything of this sort.

Results showed that role-playing led to more

helping on the part of girls in the emergency situation, and more sharing of candy on the part of boys. The experimenter's efforts to *tell* children to behave altruistically had no effect either on their helping the "distressed child" or on their sharing behavior. Furthermore, children who had been taught by this method were somewhat less helpful when their teacher "accidentally" spilled a box of paper clips and invited assistance in picking them up.

What such studies show is that the behavior of models has a powerful effect on the extent to which children will demonstrate altruistic behavior, and that telling them to be helpful contributes little, if anything. Findings of such studies, of course, contradict usual educational practice followed in homes and schools, in which adults confidently expect satisfactory results from telling children how to behave and seem singularly unaware that their own behavior sets a pattern for imitation that is more potent than the most eloquent admonition. Children grow up to be more or less the kind of individuals their teachers (parental and otherwise) are, in spite of repeated and sometimes impassioned lectures to the contrary.

Growing up is to a large extent a matter of norm taking, and this applies to altruistic behavior as much as any other dimension of behavior. Evidently, when an individual finds himself in a situation in which helping behavior is indicated, directly or by implication, he defines the situation in terms of what he has learned about himself and the way others perceive him. The kind and amount of help he gives will be consistent with the norms he believes are applicable. In addition, a kind of "contagion effect" may operate in connection with his learned repertoire of behavioral norms, just as it did in the experiment of Milgram and others with the upward-gazing crowd in the New York street. In a somewhat similar study involving altruistic behavior, an experimenter asked passersby to watch their step, as

he had lost a contact lens. About two-thirds of the passersby stopped to help him look for it, but when a model was present who was also engaged in search behavior, 95% of them joined in. In other words, the "victim" received more help when he needed it less—a clear illustration of the part played by norms in much of the behavior that passes for altruism. Apparently it is not so much the needs of the victim that determine the amount of help he will receive as it is the norms that are evoked by the situation he presents to the bystander.

### *Social Influence through Manipulation*

#### *The price of social attraction*

The rewards we receive from our association with others have a price: we must work for them. In reinforcement-theory terms, we pay for our rewards through learning modes of behavior that enable us to continue receiving reinforcement.

This point is illustrated by a study of social learning, involving two stooges and a naive subject, conducted by Jay S. Efran and Andrew Broughton (1966). When the naive subject arrived at the psychological laboratory, he found another subject (actually, the first stooge) already waiting. The latter engaged him in friendly conversation for a few minutes, until another subject (the second stooge) arrived, followed immediately by the experimenter. The three were then escorted into a room and seated at a conference table so that the naive subject could be observed through a one-way mirror. They were then told that each was to spend 5 minutes talking about himself and that subject "A" (who always turned out to be the naive subject) was to begin. The experimenter then left the room to observe the naive subject's behavior through the one-way mirror.

Both stooges had been instructed by the experimenter to look at the naive subject during his discourse, without seeming to stare. The stooge who had been waiting for the subject was to smile on occasions, when it seemed appropriate; the other stooge was not to smile or nod, but merely to look interested. The experimenter recorded the amount of time the naive subject looked directly at each of the stooges.

Results showed that the naive subject spent about 16% of the 5-minute period in looking at one or the other of the two stooges and that he spent 71% of this time looking at the stooge who had originally talked to him in a friendly way. The results of this study appear to show that people are likely to look at those from whom they expect visual cues indicating approval. Looking at others is a social technique. In this instance, it also appears to be a way of communicating a desire for approval. To put this into social-learning terms, the smiles of the first stooge reinforced the eye-contact behavior of the naive subject. The point is, however, that social approval is worth something to us and that we are willing to do something to receive it.

Working for social approval usually results in some degree of conformity. If we are to continue to be rewarded by others, we must maintain the favorable quality of their attitude toward us. Conforming to others' expectations is one way of encouraging them to maintain positive attitudes. If we value others' approval, but find that conformity is not possible, we usually try to avoid behavior that reveals our non-conformity, or at any rate we do not flaunt it.

### *Compliance and ingratiation*

In an analysis of how conformity figures in social behavior, Edward E. Jones (1965) pointed out that all interpersonal relationships involve some measure of mutual dependence, in the sense that each person involved in a

social interchange has some potential influence over both the rewards available and the psychological costs to be incurred by the others. When the status of two parties is approximately equal, they tend to work out a balance of rewards and costs in a mutually agreeable fashion. When one person in a two-person relationship (a dyad) has more status than the other, however, the more dependent person is somewhat at the mercy of the more powerful one. In such instances, less powerful individuals are likely to be concerned about their vulnerable situation and to attempt to take steps to improve it.

According to Jones, a number of strategies are available to dependent persons. Some of these strategies ensure the availability of rewards, but at the same time strengthen the power of the dominant person and reaffirm the dependence of the weaker one. Compliance is one example of a tactic of this sort. The more reliable a worker becomes in meeting his employer's demands, the more confident the employer becomes that his demands are reasonable and that the employee is content with the "bargain," as represented by the differences in their power and status. This type of conformity works out to the advantage of the person of higher status, but not to that of the dependent person.

Jones suggests that techniques associated with ingratiation do not have this disadvantage. Ingratiation includes a number of maneuvers through which dependent persons make themselves more attractive in the eyes of more powerful persons. If the tactics are successful, the more powerful individual finds himself less able to exploit or punish the ingratiator, because he then risks alienating an attractive person and thus cutting off a source of reward. His power has, in effect, been reduced.

Ingratiation is a word that has somewhat sinister and Machiavellian overtones in everyday usage, yet, as Jones points out, it is some-



thing we do almost every time we interact with other people, usually without being aware that we are doing so. The fact that we are concerned about the good opinion of others leads us to be ingratiating; to be circumspect and cautious in uttering opinions, to avoid making statements that might upset others, to play up areas of agreement, and to play down matters on which we disagree. We do this every day without feeling at all guilty about it; most of us would regard such tactics as merely "good sense." Jones suggests three ways in which ingratiation can be undertaken: compliments, agreement, and presenting oneself in a favorable light.

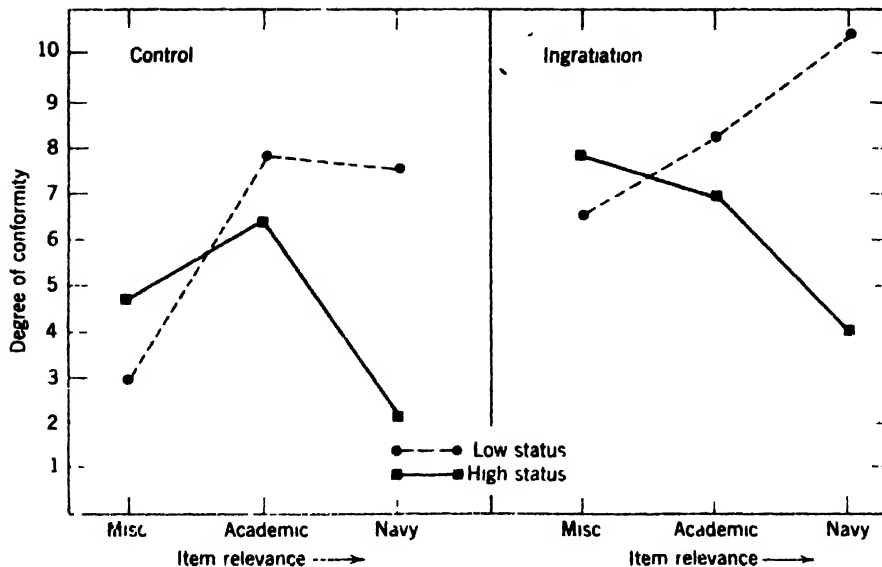
The discomfort we feel at the use of the term "ingratiation" is due in some degree to the fact that ingratiators sometimes overdo it and appear too obvious. When this occurs, persons with higher status are likely to realize that they are being manipulated and, therefore, react by negative behavior. Under such circumstances, pleasing statements uttered by the lower-status persons are perceived as insincere and false and hence no longer possess any reward value. High-status persons are, therefore, more likely to be attracted to dependent persons who show restraint in their praise or in the degree of their agreement. Jones notes, however, that the latter are protected in some degree by the vanity of the high-status person—that is, his willingness to believe fairly extravagant compliments without suspecting that he is the target of manipulative intentions. Often a kind of autistic<sup>2</sup> conspiracy results, with both the status person and the ingratiator collaborating to represent the former as being better than he actually is. Jones believes that this autistic conspiracy can

be and often is maintained by the most intricate interpersonal tactics, to the end that the ingratiator's real intentions are concealed from himself, as well as from the object of his attention. To carry out these maneuvers effectively, most of us avoid extremes of obvious flattery and sycophancy, because such extremes would give the game away and reveal the conspiracy to both parties.

Jones has tested his propositions in a number of experiments. His naval ROTC subjects received messages consisting of opinions which they believed were written by an ROTC student of higher or lower rank than their own. The messages, twelve in all, were actually simulated and were alike for each subject. Nine of the messages deviated considerably from opinion norms that had previously been established in a questionnaire administered to an equivalent sample of subjects. Subjects were to write their own opinions below the opinions received. Each subject was also told that his "partner" had expressed a preference for working with him on a leadership testing project later in the semester and he was therefore urged to make a special effort to gain the liking and respect of the prospective partner. Jones found that subjects tended to shift their points of view as they reacted to the deviant statements. In general, they tended to express views about halfway between their original positions and those expressed in the opinions they received. Both the high- and the low-status persons made some shift, because the subordinate wished to keep the good will of his superior, and the high-status subject wanted to show the subordinate that he was approachable.

This accommodation tended to take different directions for the high- and low-status groups. As Figure 6-5 shows, high-status subjects shifted least in reacting to deviant opinions relating to the Navy, whereas low-status persons shifted the most. High-status subjects shifted somewhat more than low-status subjects

<sup>2</sup>*Autistic*—a tendency for perception and other cognitive processes to be dictated to an unreasonable degree by one's own needs, to the extent of being unreasonable, irrational, or unrealistic, with the result that the world is perceived as closer to one's wishes than it actually is.



*Figure 6-5. Willingness of high- and low-ranking naval ROTC students to conform by shifting their previously expressed viewpoints on various items when confronted by opinions deviating from the norm (Jones, 1965).*

on items relating to miscellaneous matters which were of no great importance, but were somewhat more resistive on academic matters, which were considered more important, but still not as crucial to their status as naval matters. The high-status subjects were, of course, yielding on the less important items in order to appear flexible to their juniors, whereas the latter were conforming strictly on naval items which they knew were relevant to the status of their seniors, and were putting up a show of resistance on the less crucial items in order not to appear supine and overconforming.

Jones and his colleagues have investigated ingratiation in other experimentally controlled conditions. In one experiment, the dependent subjects reduced the danger of being thought opportunistic by publicly expressing low confidence in their opinions. In another, dependent subjects avoided conformity with the views expressed by an irritable and insulting superior, but tended to agree with his support-

ing arguments. In still another experiment, expression of conformity was delayed until it became clear that the high-status person would appreciate agreement.

Ingratiation may also take the form of doing favors. In fact, agreement and compliance are often thought of as favors by the givers, although receivers are understandably less likely to see them as such. An interesting point about favors, and one that is often overlooked by donors, is that they restrict the freedom of the receiver, that is, they put him under some kind of imperative to reciprocate. Favors done by a superior can presumably be repaid by continued attention, but favors performed by a subordinate serve to put the superior in a somewhat subordinate position. Superiors, therefore, prefer to maintain control of the favor situation by determining what favors are to be done and who is to do them. This is sometimes arranged by superiors taking the attitude that *they* are the only ones with the power to do

favours. If *they* do something ingratiating, it is because they are kindly people who enjoy doing favours, but if *subordinates* do something ingratiating, it is not a favour (according to the superior) but is done in the line of duty and is merely what any decent subordinate should do. Superiors view it as proper, in other words, for subordinates' freedom to be restricted, since they are already dependent, but it is not proper for them to restrict the freedom of their superiors.

### *Psychological reactance*

When one individual does a favour for a person of equal status, the relationship between them is, for the moment, out of balance until the latter can do something to bring their relationship back into balance. If the individuals are not friends, and if the favour is unrequested and unneeded, it may even be resented, a phenomenon termed *psychological reactance* by Jack W. Brehm (1966). To demonstrate this effect, Brehm and Cole (1966) created an experimental situation in which a naive subject and a confederate were given the task of judging each other. Prior to the judging, the confederate left the room and appeared with a soft drink for the naive subject, refusing any payment. After the judging, the confederate was given a rather dull, repetitive task. Under conditions in which the judging was done rather casually and no great importance was attached to it, the naive subject almost always (fourteen times out of sixteen) volunteered to help the confederate, thus discharging the debt incurred by the favour. Under conditions in which the judging was made to sound very important, however, the naive subject almost never (only once out of fourteen times) volunteered to help. It was as though the subject resented the fact that an attempt had been made through ingratiation to restrict his freedom to exercise his own judgment.

Leonard Berkowitz (1969) conducted an experiment in which one of two confederates of the experimenter requested help from a naive subject who was supposed to be supervising them. Even when the need for help arose from factors beyond the confederate's control, he was disliked more than his partner who requested no help. When the need for help was apparently due to the fault of the asker, he received less help, but was resented more by the subjects who were asked. Berkowitz explained this phenomenon in terms of psychological reactance—the subject's feeling that his freedom to act and make choices had been reduced. Again we have evidence that raises questions about altruism: instead of individuals' appreciating the fact that their help had been requested, they resented it.

### *The foot-in-the-door technique*

Although requests for help are resented, often more so than we wish to admit, they nevertheless may be used very effectively as ways of influencing and manipulating. A particularly intriguing help-requesting manipulation is the foot-in-the-door technique, one that has been used by door-to-door salesmen with considerable success—hence, its name. It is also used by any number of people who are faced with the task of getting others to do things that they might object to doing. Politicians use this technique extensively. A country's leader asks a legislative body to authorize a small military action. The grounds for this action are good, the risk is small, and the permission is granted with a minimum of argument or question. However, the action proves to be bigger than was anticipated, and the legislative body is asked for more authority, more funds, and the commitment of more ~~forces~~. Eventually, what was a decision in a small matter becomes a full-blown war. This military example can be paralleled by political maneuvering in the field of

social welfare, foreign aid, civil rights, or whatever. It is, furthermore, an important basic technique in the repertoire of anyone who has to achieve his aims by negotiation and persuasion, whether he be politician, salesman, diplomat, teacher, or psychotherapist.

The basic idea of the foot-in-the-door technique is that the target individual is asked to grant an inconsequential favor. Granting the favor evidently leads to a lowering of defenses, because the individual then finds himself less able to resist the request to grant a larger favor than he would have denied had it been asked initially. This tendency has been tested experimentally by asking housewives if they would answer a few simple questions about household products. After they had complied with this modest request, the experimenter then asked them if five or six men could come into their houses to catalog all the household products in use. Fifty-three percent of the housewives surveyed agreed to this second, rather outrageous, request, after first granting the initial small favor. This percentage of acquiescence was in marked contrast to the 22% of the housewives who granted the major request and who had not been asked the first favor (Freedman & Fraser, 1966).

### *Role playing*

This technique is used in appeals that ask the individual to imagine he were someone else. An appeal for a charitable contribution, for example, asks the listener to imagine what life would be like if *he* were crippled, or poor, or a war victim. Undoubtedly this fantasy role playing is a significant factor in the success of such campaigns.

In psychological research, the manipulation is performed by asking the subject to behave as he thinks another would behave, to take on his perceptions, values, and behavior patterns. In one study of the effect of role playing, Alan

C. Elms (1966) asked cigarette smokers to pretend that they were nonsmokers trying to convince other smokers that they should stop. Eighty smokers took part in the study and were assigned randomly to the task of playing the role of the nonsmoker or serving as the listener. Both role players and listeners were tested as to their beliefs about smoking before the experiment, immediately afterward, and three weeks later. Although both types of participants modified their attitudes in favor of stopping smoking, role players showed more attitude change than the listeners did. During the three weeks following the experiment, the attitudes of the listeners tended to regress in the direction of their previously held attitudes about smoking, whereas those of the role players became more favorable toward stopping. Data regarding actual smoking behavior are even more convincing: 46% of the role players reduced the number of cigarettes they smoked per day, and only 11% showed an increase. This is in marked contrast with the behavior of the listeners, for 27% of the latter cut down on the number of cigarettes smoked, and 30% actually smoked more than ever.

Presumably, neither the role players nor the listeners in Elms' study had any more than the usual intention to cut down on their smoking. Yet at the end of three weeks, we find that the role players said they were more favorably disposed to stopping and were actually cutting down on the number of cigarettes smoked to a greater degree than were the listeners. All this was brought about merely because the role players *pretended* they were nonsmokers trying to persuade others and the other group merely listened. The whole experiment took only two hours, but the results in terms of measurable changes in behavior were perceptible three weeks later.

A similar experiment was undertaken by Leon Mann and Irving L. Janis (1965), who asked young women volunteers, all heavy

smokers, to participate in a role-playing sequence in which they took the part of patients in a clinic and the experimenter took the part of a physician who informed them that they had cancer of the lung. Several role-playing sessions were acted out in a doctor's office in order to get the subjects to "experience" the threat of painful illness, hospitalization, and early death. A control group heard a tape recording of the role-playing sessions. Two weeks after the role-playing, a survey showed a significantly greater change in the attitudes and the smoking habits of the actual participants than of the listeners, who were designated as a control group.

Six months after the role-playing episode, the U.S. Surgeon General (1964) made his his-

toric report on the deleterious effects of smoking. This provided the investigators with an additional opportunity to assess the effect of their experimental treatment, as well as the impact of the widely publicized report. At this time, the investigators picked up an additional control group of smokers who had not been through the experiment either as role players or as passive listeners. Figure 6-6 shows the smoking history of the experimental and the two control groups over the 18-month period. Although the experimental group initially smoked slightly more than the first control group, their consumption dropped to a lower level after role playing. Both groups maintained their relative position from that point forward

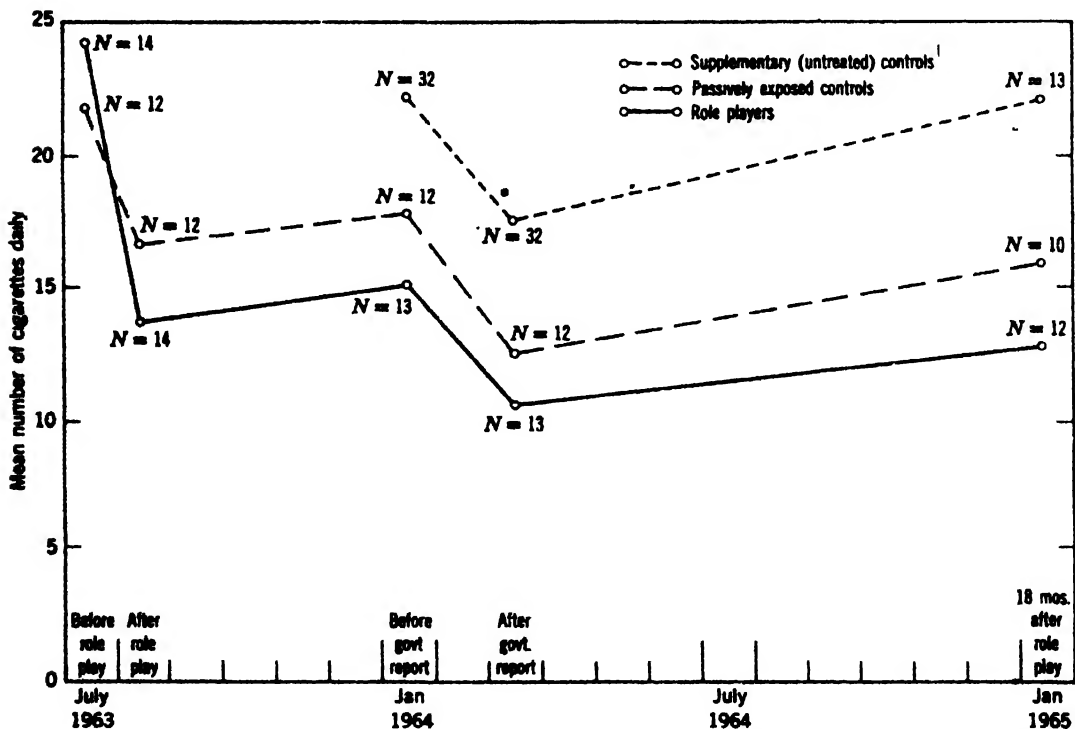


Figure 6-6. Long-term effects of emotional role playing on cigarette smoking. (Mann & Janis, 1968. Copyright © 1969 by the American Psychological Association. Reprinted by permission.)

They showed slight gains during the next six months, until the Surgeon General's report appeared. At this point, the second control group entered the picture. All three groups cut their cigarette consumption after the appearance of the Surgeon General's report. On the occasion of the final follow-up, 18 months after the experiment, the experimental group was smoking an average of about 12 cigarettes a day, in contrast to 24 a day initially; the first control group was smoking about 16 cigarettes a day, in contrast to 22 initially; and the second group was smoking about 22 a day, the same rate as a year previously.

Participation in the experiment clearly had an effect on the behavior of the subjects, with the most significant effect appearing in the smoking pattern of the experimental subjects. The comments made by one of the latter in the final follow-up interview are very revealing. One of them said.

The Surgeon General's report did not have much effect on me. But I was in this other study. A professor was doing this psychological thing and I was one of the volunteers. And that was what really affected me. . . . He was the one that scared me, not the report. . . . I got to thinking, what if it were really true and I had to go home and tell everyone that I had cancer. And right then I decided I would not go through this again, and if there were any way of preventing it I would. And I stopped smoking. It was really the professor's study that made me quit [p. 342].

It would thus appear that role playing is a simple but rather powerful type of manipulation. Although it is rather obvious that we should behave in response to our attitudes, role-playing research suggests that attitudes may also be shaped by our behavior, the opposite of what one might expect. We shall explore this rather puzzling reversal phenomenon more fully in Chapter 7.

## *Influence through Fear, Shame, and Guilt*

### *The arousal of fear through propaganda*

Although we have noted that politicians, salesmen, teachers, and others who have developed some skill in influencing the behavior of individuals and groups, make extensive use of manipulative methods, most people prefer more direct forms of persuasion. One might inform an individual, for example, that his interests would be better served by following courses of action different from those he is currently following or is intending to follow. These attempts to persuade commonly take the form of arguments intended to present logical reasons for following this or that course of action. Such arguments may be simple statements to the effect that this or that is true or will occur, or they may be elaborate propaganda campaigns, designed to change the attitudes and consequent behavior of large numbers of people. Sometimes these arguments take a positive form, in the sense that the persuader points out the pleasant and satisfying outcomes of taking this or that course of action; but often the negative is emphasized, and an attempt is made to arouse fear. Anti-smoking propaganda, for example, may stress the almost inevitable horror of lung cancer, and safe-driving propaganda may make use of traffic accident figures during the holidays to remind drivers to slow down and be careful. We have no evidence that such programs have any effect, because no adequately controlled studies have been made of them, but they are continued because of the firm belief people have in the efficacy of fear arousal as a means of persuasion.

Psychologists have, however, made studies on a small scale that are beginning to shed some light on some of the effects that fear arousal has on behavior. One of the earlier studies of

this type was conducted by Irving L. Janis and Seymour Feshbach (1953), who exposed high school freshmen to one of three types of propaganda regarding care of the teeth. One group received the strong appeal, which included pictures of diseased gums and emphasized the dangers that would result from lack of proper dental hygiene. The moderate appeal described the advantages of proper care in an impersonal way and made use of photographs showing some pathology, but not as lurid or as severe as that used in the strong appeal. The minimal appeal was brief, entirely factual, and made use of X-ray photographs and pictures of healthy teeth. Results showed that the minimal appeal got the best results, as shown by changes in the behavior of the students, even though students were more interested in and reported themselves more worried by the strong appeal. When the researchers later exposed the students to a campaign of counterpropaganda, designed to counteract some of the recommendations made during the first part of the experiment, students who had conformed to the minimal appeal also showed more resistance to the counterpropaganda message, whereas those who had been exposed to the strong appeal were more impressionable. A similar study conducted with strong (high-threat) and minimal (low-threat) appeals with respect to attitudes toward smoking also secured more attitude change with less fear arousal (Janis & Terwilliger, 1961).

In the years following the Janis-Feshbach study, there have been a number of experiments in which the variables of fear and information were manipulated. The results are not altogether clear, for high and moderate fear appeals have in some instances been successful. William J. McGuire (1966) has proposed that differences in results among the various studies can be explained in terms of differences in the amount of anxiety involved, that is, the level of anxiety that is characteristic of the individu-

als concerned, the degree of initial concern, and the amount of fear or anxiety resulting from the propaganda message. The maximum attitude change, he theorized, should take place when anxiety is at a moderate level, not too high nor too low. This theory would be in keeping with the inverted-U relationship between stress and performance proposed by Hebb (1955a) and discussed in Chapter 2. The task of determining which would be more effective, high- or low-fear-arousing propaganda, would then take the form of determining the anxiety level of the audience and the way in which they perceived the attitude or behavior to be manipulated.

The importance of knowing the audience for which the propaganda is intended is shown by an experiment conducted by Robert Paul Singer (1965), who used strong and weak fear appeals about dental hygiene practices in an attempt to modify the behavior of high school freshmen. He found that high-fear appeals were more likely to get students to express the intention to follow the recommendations of the communicator. However, much of the effect disappeared two weeks later. Less intelligent students tended to learn more as a result of high-fear communications, whereas more intelligent students learned more when the fear appeal was either low or absent. Follow-up survey also showed that less intelligent students under all conditions were more likely to forget the content of the message. With respect to intentions to follow the recommendations, fear appeared to facilitate the behavior of only the less intelligent students, whereas information alone (without fear) was sufficient to induce acceptance in the more intelligent students.

More recently, a replication of the Janis-Feshbach study was undertaken, using high-fear arousal, moderate-fear arousal, positive-affect (pleasant) approach, elaborated recommendations, and brief recommendations, all aimed at improving toothbrushing behavior.

of junior high school students. Among the dependent variables were self-report and a new chemical indicator that shows the thoroughness with which teeth have been brushed. The results, as shown five days and again six weeks after the propaganda exposure, indicated that high fear and recommendations alone produced the most *reported* behavior change, but that *actual* behavior change (as indicated by the chemical test) was most influenced by elaborated recommendations and the positive-effect treatment, an approach that emphasized the relationship of proper dental care to good health, popularity, and success (Evans, Rozelle, Lasater, Dembroski, & Allen, 1970). If moderate arousal is the key to success in propaganda campaigns, it would appear that the "soft sell" is more effective in changing attitudes and behavior than the introduction of threats and other fear stimuli, no matter how attractive they may seem to the propagandist.

Irrespective of whether McGuire's model is the best guide when it comes to planning persuasion campaigns, the research to date in this area shows that we can no longer safely assume that raising the audience's level of fear or anxiety is a sure way of securing compliance. Enough data have now been gathered to enable us to question that assumption. Like other attempts to bring about changes in the behavior of others, the use of propaganda has turned out to be more complex than common sense and the conventional wisdom would lead us to believe, and the more understanding we gain with respect to human behavior, the less certain we become that the control of human behavior is merely a matter of learning a few techniques.

### *Guilt and shame as forms of social control*

Many of our forms of social control have as their aim the arousal of fear. This is particularly true of laws and regulations that prescribe drastic punishment, such as incarceration or death,

as a penalty for transgressing against society. However, highly complex societies could not exist if they depended on fear alone as the means of social control. Their existence depends instead on the fact that all but a small proportion of their members have learned the appropriate attitudes, values, and forms of social behavior to the point that they have been internalized, that is, they have become an integrated part of the person. Social control in such societies is thus for the most part exercised through internalized norms, rather than through fear induced through threats of punishment.

There are, however, differences among cultures in the extent that internalized social norms are employed as a guide to conduct. Gerhart Piers and Milton Singer (1953) have proposed that a distinction can be made as to "guilt cultures," in which behavior is regulated by the individual's unwillingness to suffer guilt as a result of having violated an internalized norm, and "shame cultures," in which members conform to social norms only when other members are present to shame them. To elaborate somewhat on these concepts, guilt cultures emphasize self-control in the face of temptation, as well as self-initiated responsibility for one's actions if transgression occurs, whereas shame cultures exercise control through the intervention of various members of society, who in various ways coerce, threaten, or otherwise arouse fear (Grinder & McMichael, 1963). The distinction between the two kinds of cultures is, of course, a relative one, inasmuch as the most complex and highly urbanized society makes some use of threat as a way of persuasion, and the societies that rely heavily on external controls depend to some extent on internalized norms.

Although the distinction between shame and guilt cultures has been subject to some criticism (Spiro, 1961), there is experimental evidence that it does possess some validity. Robert



E. Grinder and Robert E. McMichael (1963) designed an interesting experiment to test the hypothesis that shame cultures would produce weak consciences and that guilt cultures would produce strong ones. They compared the behavior of Samoan (shame culture) and American Caucasian (guilt culture) sixth- and seventh-grade children living in rural Hawaii. Subjects operated a shooting gallery in which a ray gun was used to shoot at a revolving target. Prearranged scores from 0 to 5 appeared in lights with each pull of the trigger. Subjects were told that they would be awarded badges for scores of 35 or more; however, the equipment was rigged in such a way that scores never exceeded 32. Each subject worked alone and recorded his own scores, whereupon he brought his score sheet to the experimenter, who was in another room in the same building. It was thus possible for subjects to falsify results under the belief that they were able to escape detection on the part of the experimenter. Two weeks after the shooting gallery phase of the experiment, subjects responded to a test consisting of a number of stories in which characters violated social norms because of their dishonesty, untrustworthiness, and lack of self-control. Each story was followed by a number of optional completions, which yielded measures of remorse, willingness to confess, and willingness to make restitution.

The results of the shooting gallery phase of the study showed that Americans were much more likely to resist temptation than Samoans. None of the nineteen Samoans resisted temptation and all reported impossible scores, whereas seven out of fifteen American subjects resisted. On the story-completion test, Americans were more likely to express remorse, willingness to confess, and willingness to make restitution. Differences in guilt measures, however, turned out to be relative ones. Samoan subjects did make choices consistent with feelings of guilt, but they did not make them as

often as American children did. Nor, as the ray-gun experiment showed, were their guilt responses strong enough to keep them from cheating.

Even in industrialized and urbanized societies will there be differences in the extent to which guilt and shame operate to control behavior. Mediterranean and Southeast Asian cultures tend to be less guilt-oriented and more shame-oriented than Northern European and North American cultures.\* This explains the sense of outrage experienced by North Americans and Northern Europeans when they are forced to resort to bribery in order to obtain normal services from governmental agencies in other parts of the world. Bribery and corruption exist in North America and Northern Europe, of course, but they are much less widespread, as Gunnar Myrdal (1970) and many others have noted, and are held in check by the inhibitions inculcated by guilt-oriented societies.

### *Navaho-Eskimo differences*

Not all primitive societies are shame-oriented. Russell Eisenman (1965) has compared Eskimo (guilt-oriented) and Navaho (shame-oriented) societies in terms of the way in which the members of each culture deal with their transgressions. In the Eskimo culture there are many ways of transgressing—failure to wear some amulet, omission of homage to some particular spirit, and the like. Hence, opportunities to feel sin and guilt abound. The community's sense of guilt can be assuaged, however, when the *angakok* or spiritual leader accuses someone of having committed a sin. When this occurs, the sinner admits he has broken a taboo. The community's reaction is to treat him as a wayward child and to extend help and sympathy. In effect, the sinner becomes a kind of scapegoat and, in turn, receives a large measure of reassuring attention.

The Navaho who is accused of some transgression immediately blames it on his having been bewitched. This is accepted by the community, because it is widely believed that witches cause all kinds of suffering and may induce good Navahos to commit crimes. Hence, he is treated with sympathy and understanding by his community. Eventually, however, there must be a reckoning, and this occurs when a witch is discovered. Feelings against the witch may run so strong that he (Navaho witches are male) may be physically assaulted or even killed. As a result, Navahos are more afraid of being accused of witchcraft than they are of engaging in illicit behavior. So strong is this fear that Navahos will avoid behavior that will make them appear different in any way and will not strive to become affluent or successful. Anything that might bring them to the special attention of the community increases the probability of being accused of witchcraft and being publicly shamed, humiliated, or even attacked.

## Summary

A number of experiments show that the presence of others appears to facilitate the performance of familiar tasks, but interferes with the performance of tasks that are less familiar. The inverted-U hypothesis regarding the relationship between stress and performance may apply here: the presence of others is a source of stress, and coping with an unfamiliar task is also a source of stress. Hence, the amount of stress from two sources may interfere with the individual's effectiveness. On the other hand, a routine, well-learned task may not generate enough stress to command the subject's full attention, and the presence of others may supply the stress needed to raise the performance to a more adequate level of efficiency.

The fact that we look to others for cues that enable us to organize and structure our environment gives them a considerable leverage in guiding our behavior. Studies by Sherif of judgment in ambiguous situations show that the opinions of others set norms for behavior that are adhered to when others are no longer present. Opinions of others can also have a pronounced effect on our judgment in false-norm situations, that is, situations in which objective evidence contrary to the majority opinion is available. In the experimental situations designed by Asch, 74% yielded at least once in the series of twelve trials. Extensive yielding to false norms was also obtained at the Institute of Personality Assessment and Research at the University of California in Berkeley. Even "sophisticated" subjects (those who suspected the experiment was rigged) were not immune to such pressure. In an experiment by Crutchfield, such subjects conformed to false norms 12% of the time, as contrasted with 26% for "naive" subjects. Some research into the motivation of yielders suggests that they look to the group for help in interpreting reality. Hence, it may be that it is the need for competence rather than good fellowship that makes them vulnerable as far as suggestibility is concerned. Studies comparing people most likely to yield to false norms (yielders), with those who tend to resist (independents), show that yielders tended to be more authoritarian, conforming, compliant, overcontrolled, vacillating, confused, lacking in insight, and suggestible.

Altruism is a topic that has received a great deal of research attention in recent years, even though there are some reasonable questions as to whether "true altruism" exists at all. In the Darley-Latané experiment, subjects' willingness to help in an emergency appeared to be related inversely to the number of individuals they thought were in their group, an effect that Darley and Latané explained as a kind of "diffusion of responsibility." This effect did not

appear in more real-life studies, such as one in which a "victim" either drunk or crippled, black or white, was observed to fall down in a New York City subway train. When such emergencies occurred, the presence of others did not deter the bystanders, who offered help in the vast majority of instances. Differences between the two studies can be explained in terms of the fact that subway riders could see the victim and one another as well, which they could not in the Darley-Latané experiment. Furthermore, the psychological costs of helping (embarrassment, possible trouble, etc.) were less than the costs of not helping (self-blame, etc.). Differences in results can also be explained in terms of norms that were specific to the two situations. Attitudes, values, and behavior patterns associated with helping norms are the product of social learning, particularly in childhood. Research with children who were given opportunities to help in an emergency, or to share their candy, show that the behavior of adult models is a more significant stimulus than are admonitions on how to behave, a finding that contradicts the philosophy underlying the methods used by most parents and teachers in inculcating moral values in children. Although our repertoire of normative behaviors is usually what determines our behavior in social situations, a contagion effect may also operate, in that we are most likely to be helpful when we see others helping.

Inasmuch as associating with others has reward value for us, we will go to some pains to secure this reward. The techniques we use include attempts to make eye contact with

others, conformity, and ingratiation, as indicated by willingness to make statements that do not reflect our true opinions. Both high and low-status individuals make use of ingratiation tactics, because approval and support are necessary for both. Asking others for help has varying effects, depending on the situation. If the person who is asked regards the request as limiting his freedom of choice, his behavior is likely to be characterized by *psychological reactance*, or a generally negative feeling toward the initiator of the request. On the other hand, the request for status may open the door to the granting of status. Significant changes in behavior occur when we play roles requiring us to adopt attitudes and values that differ from those already held.

Research dealing with the use of fear to manipulate attitudes and behavior has shown arousal of fear produces varying results. Some studies have shown that a moderate level of fear is more successful a motivator than a high level of fear, but others show that a high level of fear can get results that a moderate level cannot. The relationship between fear and effectiveness that we have seen is an inverted U curve, to fear arousal as well. In general, the greatest changes in behavior are likely to take place when the level of anxiety is moderate, not too high and not too low. Cross-cultural studies show that some societies make use of shame- and fear-producing tactics to secure conformity, whereas others depend more on internalized norms and guilt.



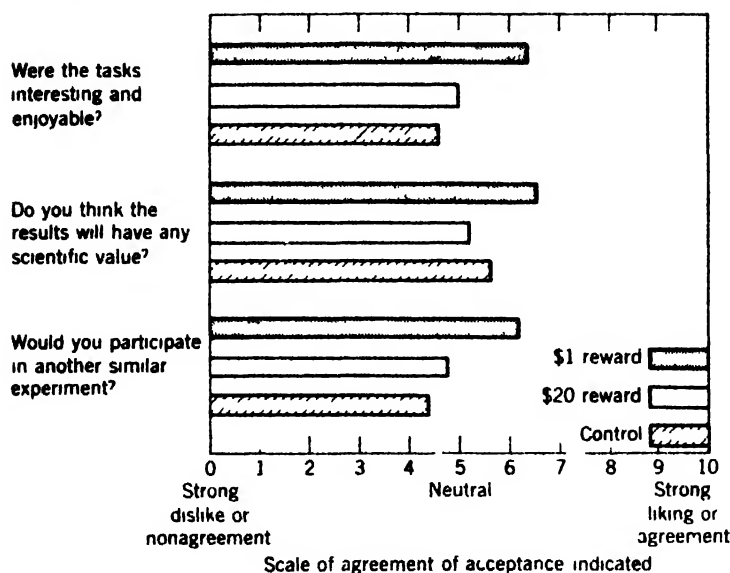


*Catherine Ursillo/  
Nancy Palmer  
Photo Agency*

# Chapter 7

## Dissonance, Consonance, and Balance

Chapter 6 dealt with social influence: changes in an individual's motives and behavior that occur in response to pressures or manipulations by others. In this chapter we examine some of the mechanisms underlying these changes, viewing them from the standpoint of the individual concerned. The theories we shall discuss have as their common basis the view that people strive to maintain some degree of consistency in their views of themselves and their environment, as well as in their relations with others. Sometimes this striving for consistency leads an individual to take steps or make statements that actually appear illogical or irrational but which, when examined more closely, turn out to be quite logical in terms of the past behavior of the individual and his attempts to maintain symmetry, balance, and consonance among the various elements in his life.



**Figure 7-1** Differences between the experimental group and a control group in their subsequent evaluations of a dull boring task which they had been asked to describe as interesting and fun and for which statement they had been paid varying amounts (Festinger & Carlsmith 1959)

nistic to the police and essays were solicited and paid for under the guise of securing arguments on both sides of the question. Attitude scales administered after the essays had been written showed that students who had been paid fifty cents (maximum dissonance) reported themselves as being more favorably disposed to the police than were students who had been paid ten dollars (minimum dissonance). The attitudes of the latter were no more favorable than were those of students who wrote no essays but merely took the attitude scales (Brehm & Cohen, 1962). Although the Cohen experiment shows that dissonance created by writing an essay can be instrumental in bringing about attitude change, the situation is by no means comparable to that of the essay writers in the Carlsmith, Collins, and Helmreich study, inasmuch as the students in the Yale experiment very likely had more negative

feelings about the police than the other subjects had about telling a small lie (Linder, Cooper, & Jones 1967).

In order for cognitive dissonance to occur, the individual must feel that his efforts are going to have some effect on others. In one study, subjects who were against the legalization of marijuana were enticed into making videotape recordings in favor of it. Half the subjects were paid fifty cents, half were paid five dollars. As one might expect from other studies, the dissonance effect occurred in the fifty-cent condition, but only when the subjects believed that the audience for which the recorded message was intended was uncommitted and neutral on the subject. Knowledge that the audience was favorable or unfavorable to the issue produced no attitude change on the part of subjects (Nel, Helmreich, & Aronson, 1969). In other words, there was little point,

as far as the subjects were concerned, in trying to convince an audience that was already committed, but there *was* some point in trying to persuade an uncommitted one.

### *Role playing and cognitive dissonance*

In Chapter 6 we described an experiment by Elms (1966) in which smokers who made a public commitment by telling others why they should not smoke actually changed their own attitudes toward smoking, as their subsequent behavior showed. By making these statements they created dissonance between what they were saying (taking a stand against smoking) and their usual behavior (smoking). Dissonance was reduced somewhat by changing their attitudes and their actual smoking behavior to a position closer to the one they had taken when they told their listeners not to smoke.

Another experiment with role playing produced even greater attitude change when an extra element of dissonance was introduced. John Wallace (1966) asked for volunteers to participate in a debate to defend a position on capital punishment which was the opposite to the one they had taken when filling out a questionnaire prior to the experiment. After the debate, some of the subjects were told that the *intellectual content* of their speeches was superior (content reward), others were told that the *manner* in which they gave their speeches was superior (role reward), and still others were told that they did as well as their opponent, or that the group favored their opponent. Questionnaires completed after the experiment showed that members of all four groups changed their attitudes (although most of the change was restricted to those who originally favored capital punishment). The greatest amount of cognitive dissonance was created for subjects who were told that the *manner* in which their speeches were presented was superior. In effect, such a compliment says: "You were talk-

ing like a person who believes what he is saying." People are likely to be caught off guard by such an idea, and dissonance is created between what they believe and the way they were told they were behaving. The prediction of dissonance theory was confirmed by the finding that the greatest change took place in this group. One subject explained what happened to him in this way.

"I tend to think of myself as an honest and sincere person. When you told me that the others considered me 'a very good actor,' I was somewhat baffled . . . actually, a little offended. The more I thought about it, the more I became convinced that what I had said in the debate was what I truly believed."

This subject reversed his stand on capital punishment completely in order to resolve the dissonance between what he believed and how others said he behaved.

Role playing can also be used to bring about attitude changes with respect to other social issues—racial integration, for example. Frances Culbertson (1957) measured attitudes before and after role-playing experiences related to the possibility of Negroes moving into white neighborhoods. All the roles favored integration in housing. Half the subjects were role players, and the other half were observers. All subjects changed their attitudes in the expected direction, with the role players showing greater change. The most significant changes, incidentally, were among subjects who scored low (in the democratic direction) on the F scale. In other words, cognitive dissonance produces the greatest attitude change when preexisting values are favorable to it.

In an earlier discussion, we mentioned the importance of personal commitment in securing the cognitive-dissonance effect. Role playing is generally effective as an attitude changer because it commits and involves the individual more deeply than he expects. But what of



tinuation of the fast than they did when they had just arrived for the test sessions.

### *Applications of dissonance theory*

We have devoted this much space to a discussion of cognitive dissonance because it has been one of the most productive concepts in social psychology. It has gone a long way in enabling behavioral scientists to free themselves from dependence on common-sense formulations and to open up new dimensions of human behavior for research. It is difficult to determine, however, just how far one should go in extending the implications of dissonance theory. As we have tried to show, a number of aspects of human behavior are made clearer and more understandable when seen in terms of dissonance, but this does not necessarily mean that all behavior is an attempt to avoid dissonance. As we pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, we tend to avoid dissonance because we seek consonance. We are more comfortable, psychologically speaking, when we can behave toward the various events in our lives as though they were consistent and inter-related.

For example, some of the research on interpersonal attractiveness can be explained in terms of cognitive dissonance, as well as in terms of mutual attraction based on similarity. We cited research in Chapter 3 to show that people who are similar tend to be attracted to one another, but it may frequently happen that people are initially attracted to one another for one reason or another and *then* develop similarities.

Some evidence for this is provided in a study by Dorothy M. Kipnis (1961). She asked eighty-seven male freshmen students, who had lived together in a dormitory for the first five weeks of the school year to describe themselves and the eight students who lived nearest them and to indicate which of the eight they would

like as companions on a double date, as a roommate, classmate, and the like. They were also asked to name their best friend and their least-liked roommate. Six weeks later she administered the same measures and asked the same questions. At the start of the study, students tended to perceive smaller differences in personality between themselves and their best friends than between themselves and their least-liked roommate, but by the end of the study those students who had originally perceived their best friends to be relatively unlike themselves had changed their self-perceptions more than students who had originally perceived their friends to be more like themselves. Thus there was a tendency for students to change self-perceptions to harmonize with the perceptions they had of their best friends. If they originally believed that their friends had negative traits, they tended to perceive similar negative traits in themselves, and conversely, they tended to adopt the same positive traits they saw in their friends. It is interesting to note that students who attributed more negative traits to their friends than to themselves tended to break off friendships more readily than those who had perceived a preponderance of positive traits.

Kipnis' research suggests that we prefer to think that our friends are similar to us. Such perceived similarity is cognitively consonant, rather than dissonant. Whenever we perceive that our friends' characteristics are different from ours, dissonance is created which can be resolved either by our changing our values and attitudes so that they become more consonant with those of our friends or by terminating the friendship.

Still another way of resolving dissonance is to assume that greater similarity exists than is actually true. George Levinger and James Breedlove (1966) interviewed sixty middle-class couples (husbands and wives separately) and secured a considerable amount of informa-

tion about family goals, communication patterns, social-emotional supportiveness, etc. They found that the couples' satisfaction with their marriage was more significantly related to their *assumed* agreement on goals than to their actual agreement. In other words, couples who were getting along best tended to assume that they had similar points of view. Whether or not they actually *were* similar appeared to be less important. Whatever dissonance existed between their attitudes and beliefs had been resolved by their tacit assumption of similarity. They were saying, in effect, "Since we like each other, we must, of course, have similar points of view."

### *Controversies regarding cognitive dissonance*

The interpretations that Festinger and the other cognitive-dissonance researchers have made of their results have aroused some controversy among psychologists. Festinger (1961) observes that organisms learn to like and value things for which they have worked very hard or have suffered, but for which they have been inadequately rewarded. This, of course, contradicts not only common sense, but learning theories as well, inasmuch as they are based on the idea that organisms learn to do things for which they have been rewarded or reinforced. Festinger, however, maintains that cognitive-dissonance theory does not really contradict reward-based theories, but proposes, instead, that a different kind of process may also operate.

The research that supports Festinger's idea is impressive and includes animal as well as human studies. Brooks Carder and Kenneth Berkowitz (1970) followed up some earlier research with rats and found that when they were given a choice of earning food through working at a bar-pressing task or getting it for nothing, they preferred to work for it. It was

not until the experimenter raised his demands to ten bar presses for a single pellet that rats showed a preference for free food.

Similar results obtain at the human level. Darwyn E. Linder and Stephen Worchel (1970) found that the more effort subjects exerted to attain conclusions in syllogistic arguments, the more likely they were to agree with their conclusions.

Although common sense and conventional learning theory would have it that "the more valuable the reward, the harder we will work for it," these studies suggest that "the harder we work for a reward, the more valuable it becomes." As Festinger indicates, this paradigm does not contradict learning theory, because such outcomes can be explained in terms of the fact that working for rewards in itself has reward value. Such an explanation would be consistent with the idea we have noted earlier, namely, that arousal itself has positive value. It will be remembered that stimulation and arousal are an important consideration in our seeking the association of others. Another possibility, which is consistent with arousal theory, is that individuals permit themselves to become involved in situations that create dissonance for them in order to have the pleasure of resolving it.

Cognitive-dissonance theory has not escaped criticism on the part of behaviorists whose critical faculties are readily alerted to any theory involving cognitive behavior. Chapanis and Chapanis (1964) found little redeeming value in cognitive-dissonance research and theory. By all odds, their criticisms should have had a devastating effect, but a review of the journals in the years following shows more cognitive-dissonance research than ever before. Tedeschi, Schlenker, and Bonoma (1971) reviewed both research and criticisms and concluded that the cognitive-dissonance position has two strong points in its favor: (a) it permits prediction of nonobvious behavior over a wide

range of apparently unrelated situations, and (b) similar results cannot be predicted from other theoretical constructs. In their opinion, attempts on the part of critics to take the cognitive element out of the studies and explain their results in purely behavioristic terms do not succeed. This does not mean that dissonance theory is completely satisfactory. For one thing, it is a motivational theory, and the mechanism that arouses the organism has so far not been satisfactorily explained.

Tedeschi and his co-workers prefer an explanation based on *impression management*. Their theory holds that subjects are not passive targets of manipulative experimenters in cognitive-dissonance studies, but rather that subjects are trying to influence experimenters' impressions of them. It may be, in fact, that subjects are manipulating experimenters. As Tedeschi et al. note, "Subjects have been quite successful in leaving the impression that they are rational and have a profound need to be consistent in their beliefs and behaviors" [p. 694].

### *Cognitive dissonance and international conflict*

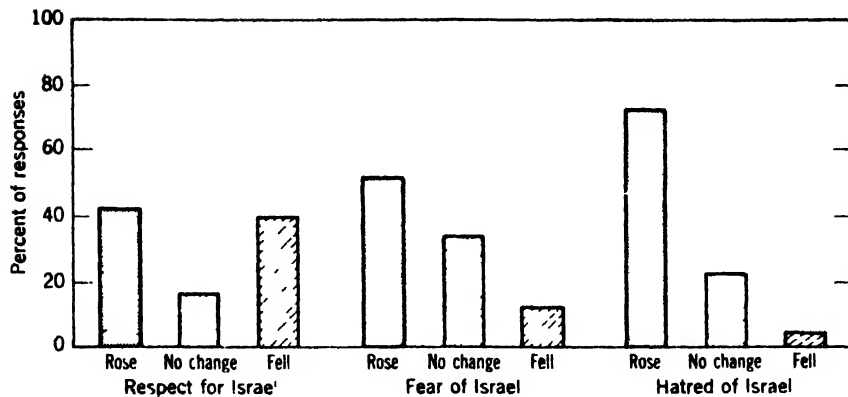
Cognitive-dissonance theory also has relevance for the international scene. The 1967 war between Israel and the Arab countries is a case in point. After the decisive victory of the Israeli forces, common sense would have predicted that the Arabs would have "seen the light," dismissed their leaders, and sued for peace. Cognitive-dissonance theory would have predicted a different outcome, namely, that the humiliation the Arabs had suffered as a result of the position they had taken would make it more, not less, attractive to them. Subsequent events have shown common-sense expectations wrong and cognitive-dissonance theory correct. When President Nasser of the United Arab Republic turned in his resignation, it was

refused, he was confirmed in power by tumultuous acclamation, and his admiring public begged him to continue the war "unto the death."

There was a similar firming of attitudes among Arabs residing in Israel. Yochaman Peres and Nira Yuval-Davis (1969) conducted opinion and attitude surveys and found that after the 1967 war, 49% of the Israeli Arabs said that Arabs must go to war with Israel, in contrast to only 18% in 1966. When they were asked how the war influenced Arabs' evaluation of the State of Israel with regard to three dimensions—Respect, Fear, and Hatred—the most significant increase occurred in Hatred, as Figure 7-2 shows.

Peres and Yuval-Davis expressed the hope that their findings would "provoke second thoughts among all those who hold the (generally untested) belief that an impressive show of force will always lessen the will to fight on the part of the loser" [p. 230], and they noted, further, that "the influence of the dissonance between the results of the fighting and the heroic self-image which all peoples (not excluding the Arabs) like to have of themselves, might well overcome any rational consideration of the cost of war" [p. 230]. Parallels between these findings and events in Southeast Asia are obvious.

To return to the comment of Tedeschi and others, namely, that impression management is the motivational mechanism that underlies attempts to reduce cognitive dissonance, it may be that peoples who are on the losing end of military actions are attempting to create an impression of logic and rationality in their opponents by their continued defiance. If so, this is hardly the effect that follows. What seems to be a more parsimonious explanation is that the target of the impression management is not the victorious opponent but the defeated individuals themselves. It is the *self* that needs to be reassured as to the logic of previous deci-



**Figure 7-2.** Percentages of Israel Arabs giving their opinion that Arabs' respect, fear, and hatred of the State of Israel had increased, remained the same, or decreased, as an aftermath of the June 1967 war (after Peres & Khal-Davis, 1969)

sions, not the members of the outgroup. In the context of cognitive-dissonance experiments, therefore, it appears that the subject is attempting to maintain his self-esteem as a rational, logical individual, and, if he is concerned at all about the impression he is making on others, he assumes that it will be the same as the opinion he has of himself, unrealistic as that may be under the circumstances.

## Theories of Consonance and Balance

### *Coping with cognitive stress and strain*

We move now to another but related set of theories that attempt to describe how individuals accommodate discrepancies and shifts in their perception of their social world. A number of psychologists have developed conceptual models that fall under this category, but most of the research has been based on the theoretical systems of Fritz Heider (1946, 1958) and Theodore M. Newcomb (1953, 1961), which appeared somewhat earlier than the other systems and which contributed substantially to their development. The Heider

and Newcomb systems have many common features in that they both describe a kind of cognitive homeostasis, that is, a tendency for attitudes to develop or orient themselves in such a way that a state of consistency or balance is developed. This state of balance is, of course, theoretical, because viable systems are always somewhat out of balance—as one element in the system changes, in response to external conditions or other causes, the relationship among the other elements changes as well. Consequently, systems tend to be in a state of continual movement and adjustment. Three kinds of states can be identified in such a theory: (a) a normal state (or state of rest or balance), (b) the intrusion of certain forces or events that upset this normal state, and (c) the operation of certain mechanisms or processes that have the function of bringing the system back to the normal state.

Heider designates these three states as *balance*, *imbalance*, and the *stress to change in order to restore balance*. Figure 7-3 consists of diagrammatic representations of four states of balance and four of imbalance.

In the first of the balanced states, the individual (P) likes the other person (O), and

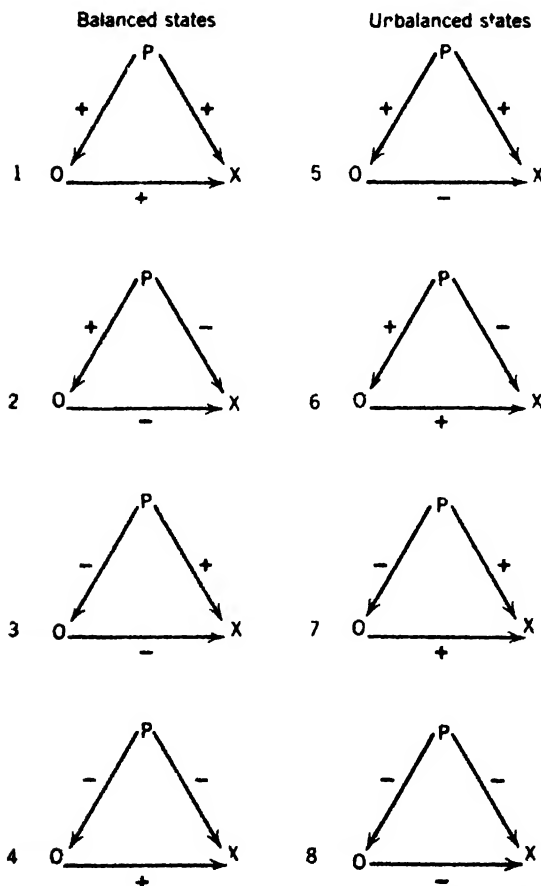
both of them are favorably disposed to some object (X) to which they both have a relationship. In the second, P likes O, and they both are unfavorably disposed toward X. In the third, O behaves or feels negatively toward both P and X, but P likes X. In the fourth, O feels or behaves positively toward X, but P dislikes both of them.

The unbalanced states lack the harmony of the balanced states and generate activity to restore harmony. In the first of these states, P likes both O and X, but O dislikes X. This

puts pressure on P to change his attitude toward X or to get O to change his attitude. The second unbalanced state can be resolved in similar fashion—by having either P or O change his attitude toward X. The third and the fourth unbalanced states can be balanced by P's changing his feelings about either O or X.

The balanced states are characterized by comfort and harmony among the elements, whereas the unbalanced states are characterized by discomfort, disharmony, and the generation of activity intended to restore some kind of balance. Unbalanced systems are represented in life situations by psychological conflicts in attitudes or behavior toward others. George (P) is very fond of Joe (O). They have been close friends ever since they stood together in the registration line as freshmen. They are enrolled in the same English class, and a paper is due the next day. George, who is very conscientious and task oriented, has finished his paper, whereas Joe has let things slide and is now faced with a desperate situation. He asks George if he can borrow his paper to look it over and get some ideas for his own. George is rather shocked at this proposal, because it sounds like cheating. Joe therefore appears to have positive feelings about cheating (X), whereas George has negative ones. Balance can be restored only by George changing his ideas about Joe's request (e.g., deciding that it is not really cheating, after all) or changing his feelings about Joe (deciding that Joe is not the kind of person he wants as a friend).

The fourth diagram in the unbalanced column of Figure 7-3 sometimes causes problems with students. If all relationships are negative, they ask, should not the state be balanced? An example may serve to clarify this problem. George (P) is against war or any kind of military involvement. He also dislikes his English instructor Dr. Mayo (O), intensely. He thinks Dr. Mayo is hopelessly out of touch with today's world, is pedantic, formalistic, and



**Figure 7-3.** Diagrams representing balanced and unbalanced states and depicting relations among an individual (P), another person (O), and an object (X) (after Heider, 1958)

hypercritical. Imagine his surprise when he turns on the television one evening and finds Dr. Mayo participating in a panel devoted to a discussion of international tensions. Contrary to George's expectations, Dr. Mayo does not defend "the establishment," but, instead, makes an eloquent plea for this country's immediate withdrawal from all military or quasi-military operations. This point of view coincides exactly with George's position.

George is now in a quandary about his feelings toward Dr. Mayo, and his conflict is precisely of the type depicted in the fourth diagram in the unbalanced column in Figure 7-3. He has negative feelings about both Dr. Mayo and war, but has just learned that Dr. Mayo has negative feelings about war, too. Although he would like to keep his feelings toward Dr. Mayo at a strongly negative level, he cannot help identifying with him to some degree. He finds himself thinking, "Anyone who feels that strongly about war can't be *all* bad." Thus he feels under considerable stress to change his attitude toward Dr. Mayo. Of course, the other way of resolving the dilemma and restoring harmony to the triad would be for him to change his feelings about war. He may decide that he dislikes Dr. Mayo so intensely that he must reject even his stand against war, and he finds himself finding reasons why his nation must continue to be involved in military operations. It depends on which value is the more central to him: being against war or being against Dr. Mayo.

In real-life situations we do not, as a general rule, readily reverse pluses and minuses. Although our feelings toward others may be depicted in terms of triads of tension and balance, these triads are linked together in complex and multiplex systems with the various segments interrelated and interlocking. George may be tempted to change his attitude toward Dr. Mayo as a result of the latter's television performance, but in all likelihood he cannot do

so without taking stock of *all* his attitudes toward middle-aged people in positions of authority. This may be more than he wants to undertake at present and hence he is content for the moment with making a slight reduction in his negative feeling toward Dr. Mayo. The fact that most people, like George, do not immediately reverse signs when systems are unbalanced does not contradict Heider's theory. Heider maintains that imbalance sets up *stresses*. Whether or not we reverse attitudes (or signs) depends on the strength of the stresses. Newcomb (1961) describes stresses as a "strain toward symmetry" (he prefers to use the term "symmetry" instead of "balance"), whereby systems that lack harmony are said to be under a kind of strain that tends to move the individual in the *direction* of restoring harmony once more. Most of us, however, can tolerate a considerable degree of strain without feeling compelled to reverse our attitudes, once they have been formed.

### *Strain and the complexity of the cognitive system*

The amount of strain we can tolerate also depends on the complexity of the cognitive system. People who lead fairly complex lives, who are involved in a variety of activities, are usually able to accommodate more strain than are those who lead simpler, less complex lives. An illiterate *caipira*, or peasant, who works on a coffee fazenda in the back country of Brazil has relatively few elements in his cognitive structure. He is conversant with a few events in a relatively limited area, both geographic and psychological. Any change in attitudinal relationship among the elements in his cognitive system calls for major changes which he is likely to resist; and if changes are inescapable, he may become extremely upset and disorganized.

Let us say, for example, that our *caipira* has a positive regard for the overseer, and both

have positive feelings about raising coffee. However, the world market becomes glutted with coffee, and the Brazilian government finds that it no longer has the funds to buy up coffee surpluses and store them. The government recommends that growers shift to other crops, and the owner asks his overseer to plant a number of different cash crops as an experiment. Coffee now assumes a negative value for the overseer, inasmuch as the owner can no longer grow it at a profit. The overseer's cognitive system is more complex than that of the *caipira*. He is better educated, has traveled to São Paulo and to Rio, has a wider circle of friends and acquaintances, reads newspapers and other mass media, and is more widely informed. He may be very reluctant to stop growing coffee, after all, he has grown it all his life, and his father before him, and he does not know how the new types of crops will fare or what problems he will encounter with them. He may not be convinced that the coffee problem is as severe as the owner thinks it is, but he follows his orders to experiment with new crops. He worries considerably about the problems involved in changing over from coffee to a new crop, but he also has other things on his mind. For example, he carries on an active correspondence with relatives back in Portugal he has never seen, his son is attending a technical institute in Rio Branco, and when he sits down with his wife in the evening to listen to their collection of records, he forgets his other problems.

The overseer's cognitive system is under some strain because he has positive regard for both the owner and for growing coffee, but the owner has negative feelings about coffee. But because the overseer's cognitive system is multiplex and complex, it absorbs some of the tension and enables him to shift it elsewhere.

The *caipira's* simple cognitive system does not permit this latitude. Whereas the overseer feels moderately threatened by the impending

changeover to other crops, the *caipira* feels very threatened. Coffee is the only thing he knows, it is an important part of his life. He cannot imagine not working in coffee. The overseer knows that all agricultural operations are similar, no matter what crop is grown, and that the *caipira* will be just as able to work on soybeans, potatoes, or cotton, as he is to work on coffee. But the *caipira* does not know that. His system has now gone out of balance. Whereas before he felt positively toward the overseer and toward coffee, and the overseer also felt positively toward coffee, the fact that the overseer is beginning to experiment with other crops is incontrovertible evidence that he will change his mind about coffee. Furthermore, the owner has already changed his mind about coffee, which is good indication that the overseer will change his mind as well.

The *caipira's* cognitive system is less able than is the overseer's to withstand imbalance or strain. He is not psychologically involved in events away from the fazenda. Opportunities for distraction are few and socially unacceptable, that is, he could get drunk every payday or beat his wife and children. The alcohol would anesthetize him so that he would not feel the tension, but the effect would be only temporary, and he would get into trouble for drinking up the money needed by his family. Beating his family would temporarily reduce tension in the sense that he could displace on them the hostility he feels toward the owner and the overseer but which he is afraid to express. He could attempt to restore balance by threatening the overseer or the owner, but he would only lose his job and perhaps be thrown into jail. In short, his cognitive system is too simple to absorb the strain and he is forced to live with his tensions, whereas the overseer is able to dissipate most of his.

The situation we have described is a real one faced by peasant populations in many one-crop countries like Brazil. Often the tensions

become so severe that drastic action appears to be the only release. One popular solution is to leave the local area and escape to the city. This only creates new problems, but the escapee is for the moment concerned only about leaving a situation that has become intolerable for him. Sometimes balance is achieved by making owners and overseers the villains and by joining in a peasants' revolt. This changes the plus between P and O to a minus, and leaves unchanged the minus between O and X and the plus between P and X. It does not solve the coffee glur, but it does create a psychologically comfortable situation, at least for the present and immediate future.

### *The ability to merge concepts*

Eli Saltz and John Wickey (1965) undertook a study which shows that the more salient attitudes and beliefs are, the less tolerant an individual is of imbalance. The attitudes of political liberals toward the various explanations of President Kennedy's assassination provided an opportunity to test hypotheses derived from balance theory. Many liberals were unwilling to accept an explanation that linked Lee Harvey Oswald (a Communist, and hence an "ultra-liberal") to the assassination. The situation is that of diagram 5 in Figure 7-3 (the first one in the "unbalanced" column), in that P (the liberal person) would ordinarily find himself attracted to O, Oswald, because the latter is also a liberal. But P is also attracted to X, President Kennedy, another liberal. If O actually hates X and kills him, a state of imbalance is created. Such a state can be avoided by deciding that O actually did not kill X. This puts pluses on all sides of the triangle and creates balanced state No. 1. Imbalance can also be avoided by deciding that Oswald was not a liberal, but was in the pay of reactionaries. This changes the plus between P and O to a minus, and produces balanced state No. 3.

There is a third possibility; namely, Oswald was the assassin, but was not alone in the crime, which was the result of a complex plot whose complete details we shall probably never know. This is an attempt to bring new cognitive elements of unknown validity into the picture and does not lend itself readily to the diagrams in Figure 7-3.

Saltz and Wickey found that the majority of the liberals (53%) had no difficulty accepting Oswald as a liberal and as the assassin. The subjects were able to merge the two concepts because for them the two conceptual systems of "Oswald the liberal" and "Oswald the assassin" were relatively flexible, or, to use Saltz's term, had "weak boundaries." The researchers predicted that subjects who were generally inclined to be rigid about their concepts, or who had "strong boundaries," would be less able to merge the two concepts. A concept-merging test provided evidence to support this hypothesis. There was a tendency for subjects who had more-than-average difficulty in merging concepts to reject the idea that Oswald was both liberal and an assassin. They also found that subjects who were ranked at the more conservative end of a liberal-conservative scale had the least difficulty in believing that Oswald was both a liberal and an assassin. The researchers interpreted this to mean that imbalance does not require a modification of beliefs for individuals who do not feel strongly about one of the unbalanced elements, in this instance, the liberalism of O and/or X.

### *Balance and the acquaintanceship process*

Theodore M. Newcomb has developed a theoretical system similar to that of Heider's which is concerned with attitude development in the process of acquaintanceship. Newcomb (1963) states that as group members interact with one another, each individual selects and processes information about objects of com-



mon interest, about other members of the group in terms of their attitudes toward the objects, and about other members in terms of their attitudes toward one another. This information is selected and processed in order to avoid the inconsistencies and conflicts involved in imbalanced relationships.

The chief reason why imbalances are avoided is that they are painful. In another context, Newcomb and his associates note that imbalance involves the following: (a) a state of conflict between the preference for a consistent, neatly ordered world—a world that makes sense—and the confrontation of a reality that is less consistent; (b) anxiety over the possibility that such a conflict may eventuate; or (c) both (Price, Harburg, & Newcomb, 1966).

One of the ways in which P can reduce strain in the perceptual system is by perceiving O realistically (i.e., inaccurately) (Newcomb, 1966). Such distortions are the result, as Newcomb (1963) pointed out, of P's decision to maintain "balance at all costs," because of its importance to his psychological adjustment, rather than to accept "the truth, whatever it costs." The decision as to which of these modes will prevail depends, of course, on the strength of the attitudes concerned and on individual differences in personality.

As interaction with strangers begins, we inevitably start to accumulate information of the type indicated above, and changes in attitude result from the need to adapt oneself simultaneously to such information and the desire to maintain balanced relationships.

As members of dyads and larger groups interact, they tend to make changes in attitudes toward one another simultaneously. If such changes are based on realistic information, they are likely to result in satisfying mutual relationships. Realism tends to increase with acquaintanceship, and when it is combined with continuing tendencies toward balance, the inevitable trend is in the direction of mutual

attraction. Stable relationships tend to persist, and balanced relationships tend to be stable because they are mutually rewarding and are unlikely to be disturbed by additional information. In other words, the longer people are acquainted, the more realistic they are about each other, but such realism is more likely to strengthen the relationship than to interfere.

Newcomb's observations are largely drawn from his analysis of the behavior of two groups of seventeen male students who lived together for sixteen weeks.<sup>1</sup> When they first arrived at the residence reserved for their use, the students were all strangers. Most of the changes in mutual attraction took place during their first few weeks together. Relationships among strangers during early periods of contact tend to be characterized by imbalance. For example, Bill likes both Fred and Mark, but then learns that the two do not get along with each other. This creates an imbalanced situation on the order of unbalanced state No. 5 in Figure 7-3. Bill can restore balance by getting to know the two men better and deciding which one he prefers, by encouraging them to become friends, or by withdrawing from the situation altogether. As Newcomb points out, unbalanced relations are unstable, that is, they are likely to undergo changes. Hence, relationships among strangers during early periods of contact are likely to be characterized by both imbalance and instability, which tend to diminish as group members become better acquainted.

Newcomb predicted that individual members' estimates of the attitudes of others in the group would become increasingly accurate with continued acquaintanceship. Results confirmed this prediction insofar as individual estimates of the attitudes of others toward one another were concerned, but not with respect to the perception of attitudes of others toward one-

<sup>1</sup>This research was mentioned in Chapter 3 in connection with the discussion of similarity in attitudes and beliefs as a basis for social attraction.

self. With respect to the latter, the errors were usually in the direction of overestimating the extent to which the individual's attraction to others is reciprocated by them. In such instances, the overriding need to be liked apparently interferes with the ability to perceive reality.

Results also bore out another of Newcomb's predictions, namely, that sensitivity to others' responses to oneself would lead to similar levels of attraction among dyads or pairs of members. An incidental finding with interesting implications was Newcomb's discovery that persons scoring low on the F scale ("non-authoritarians") were more accurate than high F-scale scorers ("authoritarians") in estimating the attitudes of others. Low F scorers also went about the acquaintanceship process by finding out which members of the group were in agreement with them on various topics and picked their friends accordingly. In other words, they were more skillful in making friendship alliances that minimized the possibility of imbalance. Subjects scoring high on the F scale, on the other hand, were more likely to keep as friends those persons to whom they were initially attracted and to perceive more agreement with them than actually existed with respect to matters of common interest.

In another test of balance theory, Price, Harburg, and Newcomb (1966) asked students to answer a questionnaire that presented them with eight imaginary situations, arranged according to Figure 7-3, involving combinations of one of their two best friends and one of the two persons on the campus they disliked the most. They were asked to indicate the extent to which each situation made them feel "uneasy" or "pleasant." In one situation, for example, they were asked how they would feel if they learned that their friend strongly liked one of the people they themselves disliked (diagram 6, Figure 7-3). Balance theory would predict that such a situation would be viewed

as unbalanced and hence as unpleasant. Other situations followed the other seven arrangements of acceptance and rejection listed in Figure 7-3. Predictions of the researchers were borne out quite nicely in the imagined situations where the first-named person (O, in Figure 7-3) was liked by the subject (P)—in other words, the situations represented by diagrams 1 and 2. This was shown by the fact that in situations represented by diagrams 1 and 2 in Figure 7-3, almost 90% of the subjects stated that they found the imagined situations pleasant, whereas in the two unbalanced states, diagrams 5 and 6 in Figure 7-3, an almost equal percentage reported that the situations made them feel uneasy. In the four remaining situations, however, in which the subject (P) does not like the first person named (O), balance theory was less effective as a predictor, because subjects were more inclined to report themselves as ambivalent or neutral. In light of these findings, the researchers suggested that there might actually be three kinds of balance situations, instead of two: (a) states in which balance has been achieved; (b) nonbalanced states, in which the individual feels indifference; and (c) imbalanced states, in which psychological forces are mobilized to correct the imbalance.

The researchers also hypothesized that negative relations between P and O tend to be characterized by uncertainty. When we like others, we are inclined to believe that they like us, as Newcomb's (1963) research has shown. When we do not like others, however, an element of uncertainty has been introduced, perhaps stemming from the relative complexity of such situations, or perhaps from the lack of information about reciprocal attitudes. This uncertainty, according to Newcomb (1968), is likely to lead to ambivalence and thus to indifference.

The idea that negative relations between P and O will lead to nonbalance and hence to passivity on the part of P has been questioned

by other psychologists. Elliot Aronson and Vernon Cope (1968), for example, have found that balance principles *can* operate in such a situation. In the Aronson-Cope experiment, subjects were insulted by an experimenter (who thus became the subjects' "enemy") and then overheard the experimenter's supervisor either praising or upbraiding him. In the praising situation, the supervisor was presented as a "friend" to the experimenter; in the criticizing situation, he was presented as the experimenter's "enemy." Subjects were then asked if they would make some telephone calls to help the supervisor in a research study. The amount of liking for the supervisor was measured by the number of telephone calls the subjects were willing to make. The results showed that subjects were more willing to work for the enemy's enemy (the upbraiding supervisor) than the enemy's friend (the praising supervisor). These results are, of course, consistent with balance theory, as well as with common sense, and show that there are instances in which a negative attitude of P toward O does not lead to ambivalence, indifference, and a "nonbalanced" state.

A. Rodney Wellens and Donald L. Thistlethwaite (1971) also put Newcomb's conclusions to the test by describing real-life situations to subjects and asking them to predict the missing relationship in P-O-X structures when they were given two out of the three relationships. The results again did not support Newcomb, but instead conformed to a more complex model proposed by William M. Wiest (1965) to extend Heider's theories. In essence, their findings were that it is possible to predict any of the missing relationships in the P-O-X triad, if two of them are known.

We should also note that relationships in the P-O-X triad can also be explained in terms of the attraction theories we discussed in Chapter 3. If we are favorable toward X, and P is also favorable toward X, we are attracted to P because of this shared attitude. Similarly, if X

is our enemy, and P is our enemy's enemy, we are attracted to P because we share a dislike of X. Similar analyses and predictions would apply to the other dimensions of the P-O-X triad.

### *Comparisons between dissonance theory and balance theory*

Although both dissonance and balance theories rest on the assumption that an individual's behavior is to some extent motivated by a drive to maintain consistency, consonance, or symmetry among cognitive elements, there are some differences between them. Balance theories are concerned with describing balance systems and how they are maintained, whereas dissonance theories attempt to predict what happens when balance is *not* maintained because some unexpected cognitive element intervenes. Research with balance systems also appears to be concerned largely with individuals' attitudes toward others with respect to their shared or nonshared attitudes toward some third element, which may be other individuals, issues, or some form of behavior. Research with cognitive dissonance, however, is more "action-oriented," in that it is concerned with a sequence of events in which the individual makes a decision or a public avowal which is inconsistent with previous behavior and which affects consequent behavior and, presumably, attitudes. There has to be some kind of manipulation in which the individual feels that he is free to make a decision, the consequences for which he is at least partly aware. He should have some degree of personal involvement and responsibility in the decision and the behavior that follows. As Festinger (1957) has described it, dissonance is a drive that leads to some kind of behavior aimed at reducing it. Once the kind of situations that produce dissonance are known, it becomes possible to design studies that demonstrate its effects in a wide variety

of situations. Although some studies have been concerned with sequences of behavior that superficially, at least, do not seem to be logical or rational, one of the aims of the researchers has been to show that these apparently irrational actions are actually motivated by the general drive to attain consonance. Thus the two types of theory do not negate or contradict each other, but actually serve to complement each other.

### Summary

The theories discussed in this chapter rest on a common base. The attempts of the individual to arrive at and maintain a certain degree of consistency in his attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance is concerned with behavior that takes place when consistency is not maintained, when one cognitive element does not "follow" from another. Dissonance may be reduced by changing one of the cognitive elements, adding new elements, or decreasing the importance of the elements. Dissonance is most likely to be created in situations in which individuals make (or believe they have made) a free choice. They should also feel responsible for their decisions, be aware of consequences, and have some degree of personal involvement in the outcome of their actions.

In one experiment, subjects were paid either twenty dollars or one dollar to tell other subjects that a boring task was interesting and to remain on call for future experiments. Telling the lie was purely voluntary; subjects were free to refuse if they wished. Investigation showed that subjects that had been paid one dollar were more likely to believe their lie than those who had been paid twenty. The rationale seems to have been: "If I made such-and-such a statement for only one dollar it must have been true, because I would not tell a lie for such a ridicu-

lous sum." Research in a number of other situations appears to support dissonance theory; attitude change under role-playing conditions appears to be another example of the operation of cognitive dissonance. Attitude changes under cognitive-dissonance conditions appear to be profound, for some research shows that not only do subjects claim to feel less pain when they have volunteered to reexperience a shock, but that there are measurable differences in skin conductance. Dissonance theory may also explain a trend that has been noted in acquaintance patterns whereby individuals become friendly with others they have as roommates or neighbors and subsequently alter their self-perceptions to conform to their perceptions of their new friends.

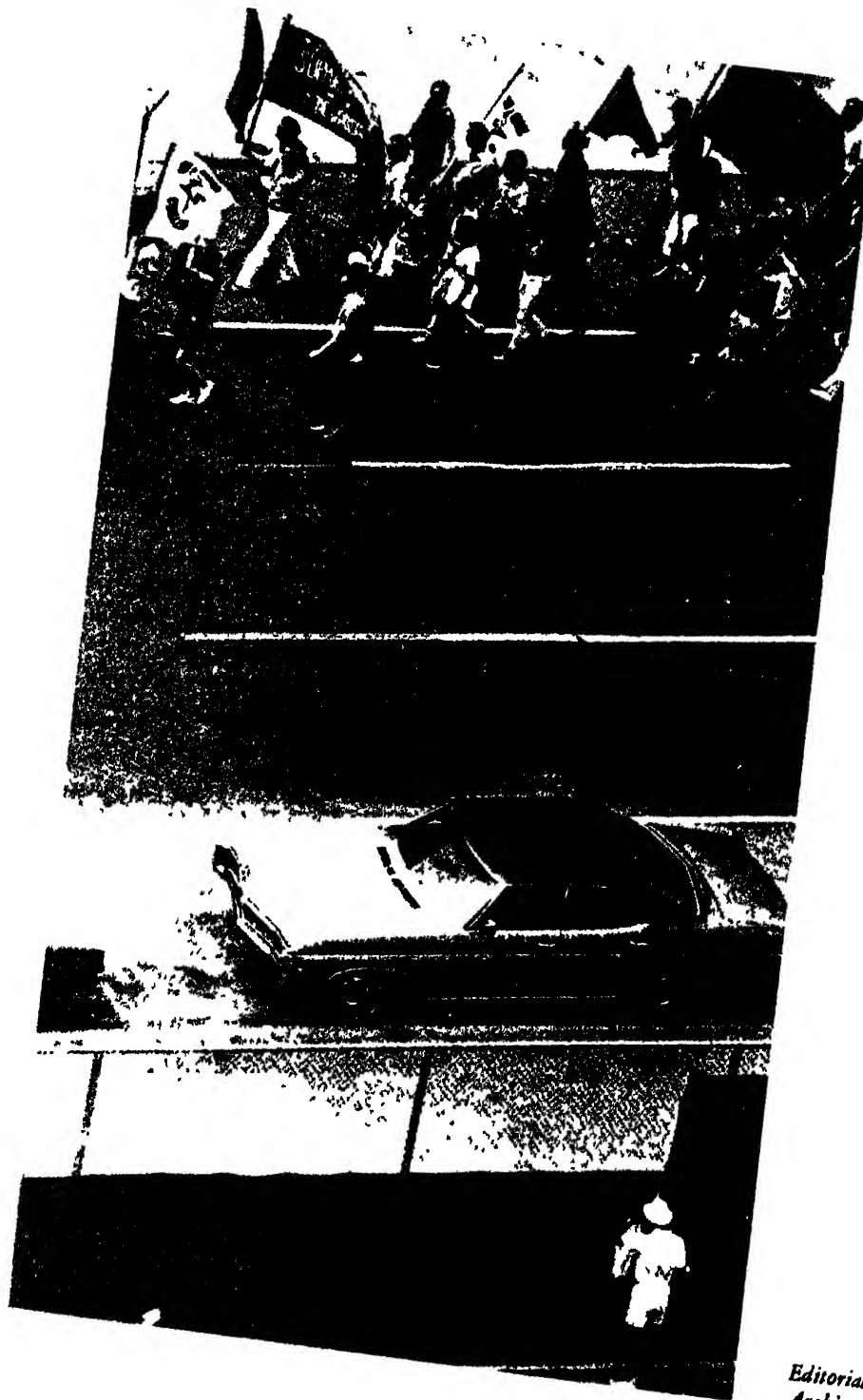
Cognitive-dissonance theory apparently contradicts reward-based learning theories, as well as common sense, because it maintains that subjects may in some instances put forth effort or express attitude changes in *negative* relationship to the amount of reward. Although a number of studies support this idea, it is not surprising that a number of criticisms have been leveled at it. Answers to this criticism take the line that cognitive dissonance theory permits the prediction of behavior over a wide range of apparently unrelated situations, and that similar results cannot be predicted from other theoretical formulations. The weakness in cognitive-dissonance theory is that it does not attempt to explain the underlying motivation. Tedeschi and others have suggested that the mechanism involved is one of the subject's attempting to impress his experimenters with his rationality. Other evidence, particularly that emanating from outcomes of the effect of decisive military actions on the defeated, suggest that the losers, like the subjects of cognitive dissonance experiments, are attempting to preserve their self-esteem and are only incidentally concerned with the impression they are making on others outside their group.

Theories have been developed by Heider and by Newcomb to describe how cognitive systems maintain balance, consistency, or symmetry. The implications of these theories have been studied with respect to friendship patterns, whereby our attitudes toward an acquaintance are affected by his and our attitudes toward a third object. Some arrangements of positive and negative attitudes, as represented by the axes of this three-way relationship, lead to balanced situations; some do not. Imbalance in the triad produces what Newcomb calls a "strain toward symmetry," where the individual concerned is impelled to change some of the elements in the relationship. As the acquaintanceship process progresses, it normally generates an increase in accurate information about others, and this, in turn, facilitates attraction, according to Newcomb. Unbalanced relationships in the triad tend to be unstable, whereas the acquisition of information aids stability. Newcomb has concluded that there may actually be three kinds of situations: (a) states in which balance has been achieved; (b) nonbalanced states in which the individual feels indif-

ference; and (c) imbalanced states in which the individual takes steps to restore balance. Newcomb's idea that negative relations between a person (P) and another individual (O) may lead to a nonbalanced situation characterized by P's apathy has been challenged by researchers who have found that there is more likely to be some activity leading to an attempt to restore balance. Hence, the three-way situations are likely to be either balanced and at rest, or imbalanced, with an attempt on the part of P to restore balance and symmetry.

Dissonance and balance theories are both concerned with individuals' attempts to maintain consistency among cognitive elements: perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and the behavior that results from these states or motives. Balance theory attempts to explain how balance is maintained, and dissonance theory attempts to predict what happens when it has been disturbed by discrepancies between an individual's avowed motives and his behavior. The two types of theories are not in opposition, but complement each other to a large degree.





*Editorial Photocolor  
Archives*

# Chapter 8

## Social Status: Its Effect on Social Motives and Behavior

### *Social Status: Its Effect on Social Motives and Behavior*

In Chapter 7 we discussed cognitive systems used by the individual in organizing and modifying his attitudes and behavior with respect to himself and others. In the present chapter and the one that follows we shall again be concerned with systems, but rather with systems existing in the social environment, those that societies and other groups develop in order to facilitate effective interaction among their members and to provide for their own continuity. Such systems are produced by the interaction of members with one another, as well as by their interaction with the system itself. The control exercised over individual behavior by a social system through its norms has important implications for the development



of the full range of social motives. The process of adapting to and participating in these systems, of course, is primarily a matter of social learning.

### *Position, status, and role*

In a review of research and theory relating to social structure, Daniel R. Miller (1963) points out that a social system can have three different dimensions: (a) organized and unorganized social units, (b) structures, and (c) a set of social positions. Examples of organized units are family, church, school, and club; examples of unorganized units are men, women, and working-class people. The structures of a social system may include its government, its military organizations, its banking system, etc. Any social unit can be divided into positions: a family may consist of father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister; a school may be divided into administrators, teachers, students, clerical personnel, and so forth. Each position in a social system has both rights and obligations and can be occupied only by a person who has the requisite qualifications.

An individual's status is ordinarily, but not necessarily, influenced by the position he holds in a social system.<sup>1</sup> An individual who is a father, for example, ordinarily holds a high degree of status in the family group. The fact that he occupies this important position is likely to contribute to his self-esteem, and he may "transfer" some of this status to interactions with others outside the family group. He may be more at ease with other fathers, feeling that he is in some way equal to them, and he may look down somewhat on men who have not

attained the status of father. Being a father, however, does not necessarily bring status to some men. Some fathers are insulted, exploited, or ignored by other members of the family. It is because of such exceptions that we say that a position 'ordinarily, but not necessarily,' influences status. The point is that an individual's status is always dependent on how others perceive and value him—on the amount of prestige they are willing to accord him. The amount of status possessed by an individual will be determined by the extent to which he is able to influence others, to make his own decisions, and to expect deference from others. A fourth dimension consists of the relative ease or difficulty that will be experienced by those wishing to attain the status level in question. The status of a position, therefore, may be defined in terms of its power, prestige, and exclusiveness.

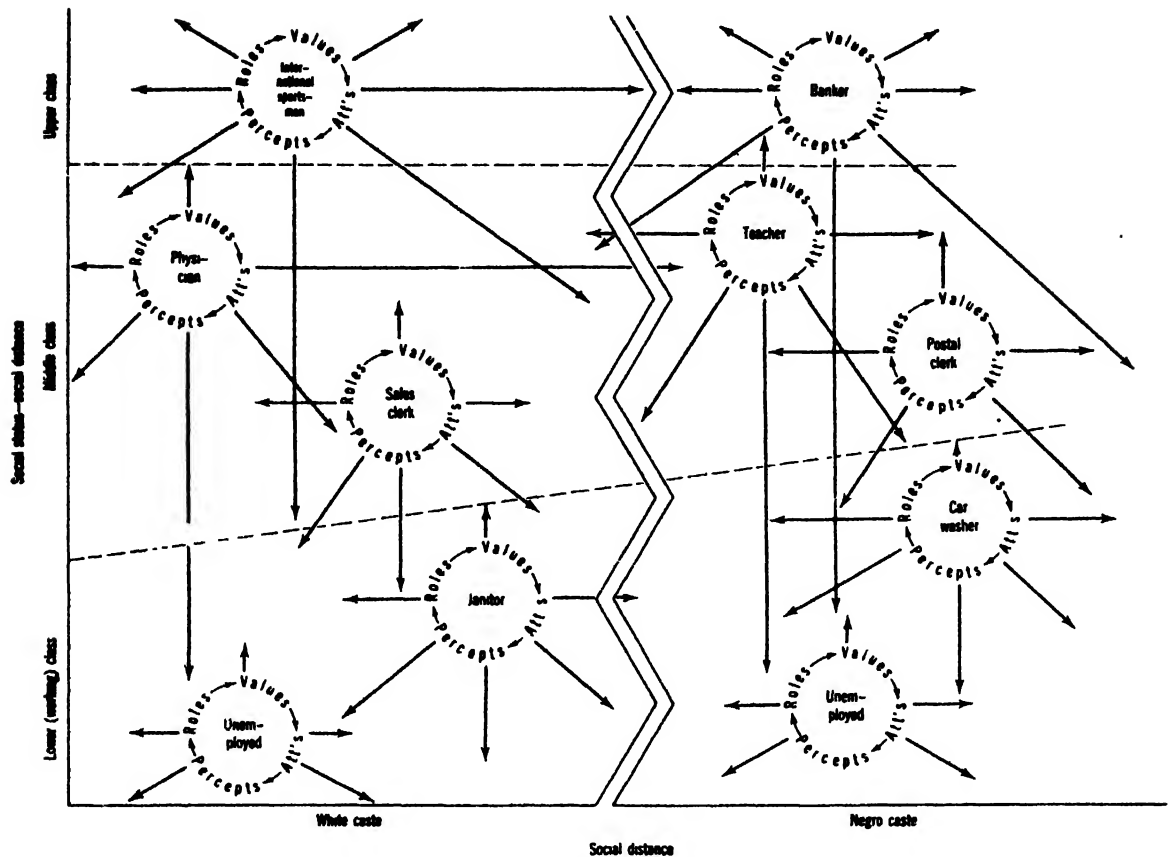
The fact that one occupies a position in a social system also implies that he plays certain roles, for he is expected by other members of society to behave in certain ways and to perform certain functions. His awareness of society's expectations leads him to develop similar expectations for his own behavior. Inasmuch as persons occupying the position we call 'physician' are expected to perform certain prescribed roles, we sometimes refer to the 'social role(s) of the physician,' instead of the position of physician.

Position is described here in terms of the occupations held by the individual. Each occupation may be defined by the roles assigned to it by society. Roles influence the values that tend to be held by persons occupying the position, values influence attitudes, attitudes influence percepts, or the way in which the individual views himself and his environment, and, finally, the individual's percepts influence his roles and the way in which he plays them.

Figure 8-1 is a graphic presentation of the relationship between position, status, and role.

Positions are arranged diagrammatically in Figure 8-1 in a rough, schematic way along two

<sup>1</sup>Ralph Linton (1945) collapses the concepts of status and position, and calls an individual's place in a social system his *status*. In our discussion, however, we will keep the concepts of position and status separate, with *position* referring to a place in a social system, and *status* referring to the amount of prestige that may be attached either to a person or to a position or role.



**Figure 8-1.** *The social structure, as expressed in terms of social status, distance, position, class, caste, and influence.*

dimensions. The vertical dimension represents the status of the position in its respective caste. Social distance is also represented horizontally, as viewed from the left, and suggests the exclusiveness of the white caste, as well as the social distance between individuals occupying the indicated positions. The zigzag vertical break depicts the social gap between the white and the Negro caste.<sup>2</sup> Lines terminating in arrows that radiate out from the social positions

indicate the degree and direction of social influence or power that individuals occupying the positions are able to bring to bear on the behavior of others. The longer the line, the more effective the influence.

The diagram includes a number of distortions, introduced partly because of space limitations and partly because of the difficulty of representing a multidimensional situation two-dimensionally. The social distance expressed by the vertical scale (social status) is greatly understated, as is the social distance represented by

<sup>2</sup>This is, of course, not the only caste division in the United States. There are, for instance, also caste differences between Mexicans and Anglos, whereas other minority groups (Japanese-Americans, Chinese-Americans, Amish, etc.) are regarded (or

may regard themselves) in such a way that barriers are to some degree erected between them and the dominant social group or groups.

the gap between the white and the Negro caste. Hence, the diagram should be considered only as suggestive of the relationships existing between the variables here depicted.

Although we have used position as the anchor point for this diagram, it should be recognized that each of these aspects of social behavior influences the others. An individual's status depends in part on the position he occupies, and the status that is accorded him by other members of society which enables him to occupy the position. The individual maintains his hold on a certain position by performing the roles that go with it. It sometimes happens that people come to occupy certain positions because they play certain roles. For example, people who play leaderlike roles are likely to find themselves occupying positions of leadership, although not necessarily the ones to which they aspire.

People occupying different positions at approximately the same level of social status often have more in common with one another than they do with people in positions above and below them, even though the latter may live in the same community with them or work in the same field. To use an illustrative example, let us say that Tom Schwartz is twenty-five years old and is a junior executive with a major oil company in California. The company makes a cruise to Hawaii available to employees and their families at below-cost rates. Mr. and Mrs. Schwartz go on the cruise and after a day at sea become quite friendly with two other couples whom they have never seen before and who live in other California cities. Also on the cruise are senior executives from the same branch where Tom is employed, as well as service station attendants from his locale—all people with whom he is acquainted. Mr. and Mrs. Schwartz greet these people in a friendly way when they encounter them on board the ship, but they spend most of their time with the two couples they have just met. It comes

as little surprise to us to learn that the other two men are also junior executives in their mid-twenties. The Schwartzes are also quite aware of the senior executives and are a bit envious of the more luxurious quarters they occupy, but they do not seek them out. When one of the senior executives bought the Schwartzes a drink, they felt pleased and flattered, but did not really feel at ease.

People at a given status level find themselves attracted to their peers—those equal to them in status—because with them they find themselves more socially and psychologically comfortable. This more or less spontaneous mutual attraction at certain status levels helps produce the groupings that are termed *social classes*. Figure 8-1 shows how certain positions may be arranged within the social-class limits that divide the social structure into horizontal bands or layers. Social classes in the United States are relatively permeable. It is possible, for example, for persons born into the lower classes to learn the behavior patterns of the middle class and to find ways of entering the middle class. W. Lloyd Warner and James C. Abegglen (1955) studied the backgrounds of executives in large business firms and found that the proportion coming from working-class homes increased between 1928 and 1952. It is the general availability of low-cost education coupled with a widespread tolerance of upward mobility that enables working-class members to become middle class.

Social caste boundaries are less permeable than class boundaries. Interaction among members of different castes is highly restricted, even when individuals are of the same social class and occupy similar positions. Of course, such distinctions are relative and are specific as to situation. There is relatively little differentiation between Negro and white caste in the American Army, particularly during military operations, but differentiation along color lines is more likely to appear among soldiers when

they are on leave in recreation centers and even more so when they visit their home towns (Moskos, 1966). However, the Army has another caste system: military rank, which takes precedence over caste differences based on skin color. Here again there is more intimate association between officers and enlisted men during military operations, and considerably less when they are off duty.

Caste differences in America are not as sharply drawn as they are in many other countries—India, for example. In India, there are also urban and rural differences in the strictness with which caste lines are observed, with rural dwellers being more traditional than urban dwellers, as a general rule.

The barriers that interfere with association between people occupying various positions tend to increase social distance. Within a given caste, vertical social distances tend to be the major ones. As noted earlier, it is easier for people occupying different positions within the same class to associate with one another than it is for them to associate with persons in other classes. Caste barriers, however, create a horizontal social distance and make it difficult for persons at the same class level to associate with one another.

Two comments are in order at this point. One is that social status systems are not only universal in all groups, large and small, formal and informal, but that they antedate the human race. Animal societies have well-demarcated status systems, in which members at the top have prestige and influence, just as top members of human societies do. Status systems in flocks of domestic chickens are maintained by the "peck-order," which designates which chickens may peck and which must submit. This peck-order, as Richard F. Gottier (1968) notes, is not only the basis for almost all the social behavior of chickens, but is essential for their well-being. "The better organized the flock, and the more stable the peck-order, the greater

the likelihood that chickens will gain weight, have higher egg production, and will be free from fighting and the extremes of social tension." [p. 223].

There is even some evidence that animals may inherit social status. Carl B. Koford (1963) noted that in bands of free-ranging rhesus monkeys, adolescent males typically leave their mothers in the central part of the band and take on a low social rank at its periphery. The adolescent sons of mothers possessing high status, however, may remain in the center of the band and rise to high social rank without first becoming peripheral.

A second comment is that social status systems are not maintained exclusively by "pressure from above." It is impossible to have leaders without followers. Social systems exist because they satisfy needs that cannot be met in other ways, and the willingness of members to participate in them is evidence of their acceptance of the system and its workings. When they no longer agree, of course, some kind of major social upheaval is in prospect. The reconstituted society will, however, develop a social status structure, although the positions may have different titles and be occupied by different individuals.

American male college students rather typically reject any idea that they are acquiescent collaborators in social systems that elevate a few at the expense of the many. Anthony Doob and Alan E. Gross (1968) asked introductory psychology students to imagine a situation in which they were stopped at a traffic light behind a new Chrysler (or an old Rambler). When the light turns green, the driver of the car ahead does not proceed and for no apparent reason. Would they honk at him? And, if so, how long would they wait before honking? Half the students got questionnaires relating to the old Rambler (low status), and half received questionnaires relating to the new Chrysler (high status). All males getting the high-status ques-

tionnaire said they would honk; the estimated mean time between the light change and honking was 5.5 seconds. Two-thirds of the males answering the low-status questionnaire said they would not honk; the estimated mean delay before honking was 9.1 seconds. It comes as no surprise that the students thought they would be more likely to honk at the more prestigious new Chrysler and that they would honk sooner. This eagerness to express hostility toward persons of high status and prestige is in keeping with the male self-image.

In an actual test situation, however, the results were quite different. Men drivers behind the laggard automobile honked more quickly than women drivers, showing the typical low-level male frustration tolerance, but they delayed their honking significantly longer for the new Chrysler (8.5 seconds) than they did for the old Rambler (6.8 seconds). Of those subjects who did not honk at all, three-fourths of all drivers gave this courteous treatment to the driver of the new Chrysler, and only one fourth to the driver of the old Rambler.

In short, we may think we are not acquiescing in the social status system, but our behavior shows that in reality, the great majority of us are unwitting collaborators. Incidentally, women responding to the questionnaire were more realistic. A third of them said they would not honk at the high-status car, and their average estimated waiting times before honking were remarkably close to what the field study showed.

## *The American Social-Class Structure*

### *Earlier studies*

It is possible to study a society in terms of who associates with whom on an equal-status basis and then to sort these clusters or groups of

individuals in such a way that they are ranked from those who are reputed to have the most prestige and influence to those with the least. Those individuals who exercise the greatest power, and hence are accorded the highest prestige, are considered to be upper class, and those with the least power and prestige, the lower class.

It is relatively easy to determine who has the most and the least power and prestige in a given society. The problem of how the rest of the population should be divided is more complex. A. B. Hollingshead (1949), a sociologist who studied "Elmtown," a small town in the American Midwest in the late 1940's, divided the social spectrum into five classes, because most of the people he interviewed in the town he was studying were able to discern five status levels. W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt (1941), sociologists who studied "Yankee City" (Newburyport, Mass.), during the 1930's, decided on a threefold scale—upper, middle, and lower—with each class subdivided into an upper and a lower segment. Thus they recognized two middle classes: an upper middle and a lower middle. Richard C. Centers (1949) polled a broad sampling of American men and found that all but 2% could assign themselves to one of the following classes: upper, middle, working, and lower. Most social psychologists and sociologists also recognize an upper- and a lower-middle class. What Warner and Lunt would call "upper-lower class" is often referred to as "working class."

Figure 8-2 attempts to sort out the classifications used in these three sets of research studies and should be interpreted as follows:

Each column represents 100% of the population sampled by the respective researchers whose names are at the heads of the column. The area in each column reflects the percentage of the sample falling in that category. Centers found that 2% of his sample were unable to identify their social class or did not believe in

Centers (1949)	Hollingshead (1949)	Warner and Lunt (1941)
Upper class 3%	Class I 1%	Upper-upper class 1.4%
	Class II 5%	Lower-upper class 1.6%
Middle class 44%	Class III 24%	Upper-middle class 10.3%
		Lower-middle class 28.4%
Working class 52%	Class IV 44%	Upper-lower class 32.9%
		Lower-lower class 25.5%
Lower class 1%	Class V 26%	

*Figure 8-2. Social-class stratification in the United States.*

classes; about 1% of the residents of Newburyport could not be classified by Warner and Lunt. These two residuals have been excluded from the cells in the figure, which represent percentages of classifiable persons in the respective samples. It should also be noted that data on which these studies are based are twenty-five or more years old, and that

economic and educational progress have significantly increased the proportion of the middle classes at the expense of the lower classes.

Only the study by Centers makes any claim to be representative of the nation as a whole; the other two studies presumably reflect local situations, although it may be argued that "Elm-town" and "Yankee City" are more or less rep-

representative of many other American communities. A cursory comparison of these two rating systems shows that they are roughly similar, and if Centers' "working class" category is redefined to read "lower class," his categories are consistent with those of Warner and Lunt.

The major social-class studies were published in the 1940's. They attracted a great deal of attention at the time, partly because many people had thought that our forebears left the idea of social class behind in Europe and that, as a consequence, the United States was relatively free of class differences. People arrived at this notion because they tended to think of social class in economic and political terms. Inasmuch as Americans had achieved a higher degree of economic and political freedom than people in most countries, it seemed to them that social class must somehow have been eliminated. The sociologists' reports that differences in social status actually exist and that they have significant effects on many different aspects of thinking, feeling, and behaving had an unsettling effect on many people.

In the years since the appearance of these pioneering studies, psychologists, cultural anthropologists, and sociologists have found that social-class differences are related to a wide variety of variables, for example, mental health, crime and delinquency, *n Ach* and *n Aff*, life style, personality patterns, authoritarianism, and child-rearing patterns. We now know enough about social classes to say that they represent identifiable and definable subcultures within the general American culture. That is, there are certain values, attitudes, and styles of behavior that are characteristic of some classes and not of others. Furthermore, social classes are the major groups that serve as sources of identity and definition within the larger national group. The attitudes and behavior of Americans of various class levels may seem more similar than different, when compared with Mexicans or Arabs, but when

Americans are compared with one another along class lines, differences not only become apparent, but in many instances seem quite marked.

### *The middle class*

Let us begin by examining the American middle class. This is a class that has received the most intense scrutiny by behavioral scientists, partly because it is the most readily available for study, in the sense that middle-class people are more responsive to questionnaires and interviews than are members of the other classes. The middle class today is probably the largest social class in America. It is certainly the most influential as far as social norms, values, attitudes, and behavior patterns are concerned. This class is sometimes called the "white-collar" class (people in professional, managerial, and clerical positions), in contrast to the "blue-collar" or "working class" (skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled operatives). In the study of "Yankee City," Warner and Lunt (1941) estimated the percentages of middle-class (MC) and lower-class (LC) residents at 38% and 58%, respectively. The more than thirty years that have passed since the Yankee City study have seen a great deal of social change. Many young people from working-class (WC) families or even lower-class (LC) families, have taken advantage of opportunities for self-improvement provided by the public schools and universities, training programs in industry, government agencies, and the armed forces, and have entered the middle class (MC).<sup>3</sup>

What we today call the middle class is a linear descendant from what has been historically the bourgeois or burgher element in society: the

<sup>3</sup>From this point on in our discussion, we will use the symbol UC to represent "upper class," MC for "middle class," UMC for "upper-middle class," LMC for "lower-middle class," WC for "working class," and LC for "lower class."



*"When you come right down to it, I'm hopelessly middle class."*

*Ned Hilton;  
© 1967 Saturday  
Review, Inc.*

residents of towns and cities who were involved in some kind of "service occupation," that is, who were not involved in the cruder forms of production. Today, most MC people are still identified with service occupations: as government employees and businessmen, as teachers and social workers, as undertakers and public relations representatives. Chief values of the MC include a high regard for education, thrift, self-improvement, cleanliness, the pleasures and the duties of family life, home ownership, responsibility for one's own actions, and respectability. In North America and Northern Europe the MC is largely future-oriented in the sense that immediate pleasures and satisfactions are put aside or postponed in favor of larger future rewards. Thrift is practiced by setting aside small amounts of money for college, for setting up medical or law practices, or for a down payment on a home. The emphasis in the MC is on control and inhibition of impulses; fighting and destructiveness are discouraged, and every effort is made to channel hostility into more constructive (or at least socially

acceptable) forms of behavior, such as competitiveness, sports, and games.

The MC today seems to be less restrained than it was in previous generations. It is somewhat more relaxed about minor lawbreaking and sex, although hard statistics on the extent of this change in outlook are hard to come by. There is no doubt that there is a great deal of talk about the "new morality," and there undoubtedly is an increase in such "antiestablishment" forms of behavior as shoplifting, burglary, drug use, rioting, and sexual promiscuity among the young. How much *real* increase is difficult to determine, of course. The widespread attention given the increase in illegal activity has, however, led many to overlook the really significant difference between MC and LC practices. In contrast to the LC individual, the typical MC person is still concerned about impulse control, is a great deal more aware of the consequences of his behavior, and, as a consequence, acts with more restraint. Where emotions are concerned, the differences between MC and LC behavior may



not be as clear-cut as they used to be, but they are still there. Other significant ways in which MC and LC people differ will be discussed in due course.

### *The upper class*

Less is known about the UC than any of the three major social classes. For one thing, only a small percentage of a given community may be considered truly UC. Hollingshead (1949) found only four families in Elmtown that could be considered Class I, and he combined them with Class II for all his comparisons. Many communities may not actually have anyone who would qualify as genuinely UC, and people who are "upper crust" in one community would be considered "very middle class" in another. Another problem has to do with the lack of consistent patterns of UC behavior from one region or community to another. In the Southwest, UC life is organized around the ranch; in the larger urban centers it may focus on art collecting, the symphony and opera, and civic improvement. Such variability, coupled with the small number of samples, makes it difficult to generalize as to the salient characteristics of UC people. Still another problem is accessibility. Behavioral scientists are all MC and are by nature of the social system excluded from intimate contact with UC members of society. UC people are singularly uninterested and may even be quite hostile about being subjects in scientific research. Hence, descriptions of their behavior must be based on data drawn from reports in the mass media, official and unofficial biographies, and other types of hearsay evidence. It is hardly surprising that behavioral scientists have focused their research activities mostly on the other social classes.

In spite of these handicaps, it has been possible to identify some UC characteristics. Family reputation and family ties are generally given

a high degree of importance in UC circles. Whereas an MC youth expects to attain economic and social success through his own efforts, with a minimum of help from his parents, UC youths know that their economic and social future is assured. They are free to exert themselves or not; whatever they do, they will always be a Vanderbilt or a Kennedy or whatever. In schools and colleges they are, therefore, inclined to be much less competitive and to show less *n Ach* than the typical MC student.

The most obvious fact about the UC is, of course, their affluence, but it would be a mistake to say that this is the major difference. Actually, there are many UMC families whose income and financial holdings are quite sizable, yet who would not be considered to be UC. This is particularly true of people who have made their money within their own lifetime. It takes some time—at least two generations—for a family to become established as UC. The UC economic base thus tends to be inherited. It is less likely to come from salary or professional fees as is usual with MC people, but rather is more likely to come in the form of income from securities and capital gains resulting from sales and exchanges of property. How money is spent is also important. In America it has become customary to give large sums of money to family foundations, which not only serve to carry out projects related to the donors' special interest—be it art, education, little magazines, scientific research, or social welfare—but which also serve to glorify and magnify the family name. Money is also spent in ways that have no obvious practical value or utility: in travel, for entertainment on a grand scale, for elegant clothes, and for horses and yachts. MC people are more likely to look for practical reasons to help them rationalize similar expenditures: for example, a mountain cabin is justified on the basis that it is a good investment in real estate, as well as a pleasant vacation hideaway.

The kind of house one lives in and its location are also important. UC families are more likely to prefer older houses in pleasant scenic districts—on a hill, for example, or overlooking a bay or river. Expensive new houses are bought by UMC families rather than by the UC.

A major difference between UC and wealthy MC families lies in the amount of influence they are able to demonstrate—what we have termed “prestige.” Common sense and the conventional wisdom would explain prestige in terms of money and political pressure, yet UC persons are able to exert a considerable degree of influence without a major investment of either money or political activity. It is customary, for example, to appoint a member of a prestigious family as the chairman of a national or community fund drive. Such a move serves as a kind of insurance against failure. The fact that such an important person is willing to serve as the figurehead (sometimes a hardworking figurehead and sometimes not) shows that the cause is a legitimate one. It reassures people to the extent that they are willing to give more than they would otherwise contribute. When UC people try their hand at politics, their prestige gives them an extra advantage. For one thing, they do not have to invest as much time and money in publicity as their opponents, for they are already well known. Their motives are less likely to be questioned, and their family name gives them a reputation (sometimes unearned) for respectability, integrity, and altruism.

Still another characteristic of UC families is the greater power and influence exerted by women. By and large it is the women who determine who shall be invited and included, and who shall be excluded. They are the ones who make the rules that govern the activities and relationships within the subculture, and who classify each member into a hierarchy based on precedent and prestige. Their power

is somewhat in contrast with MC society, in which the influence and power of women is approximately equal to that of men.

### *The working class and the lower class*

A major difference between WC and LC families on the one hand, and UC and MC families on the other, lies in the status of women. The WC and LC women are expected to play roles that are more subordinate than those played by women in the two upper classes. The WC and LC men have a definite edge over women when it comes to freedom and power, and a sizable number of men at the lowest social level take advantage of this fact and abandon their families when the going becomes difficult. As a consequence, the proportion of fatherless families may run as high as 30 or 40% in some slum areas.

Before commenting on other contrasts between the two upper and the two lower classes, it may be well to note some of the differences between the WC and the LC. The designations are somewhat confusing, because some behavioral scientists refer to both classes as LC, whereas some refer to both as WC. Warner and Lunt (1941) do not refer to WC at all, and Hollingshead (1949) refers to the classes only by number. We shall try to be consistent, however, by equating WC with Warner and Lunt's “upperlower class” and Hollingshead's Class IV. In general, WC members are more likely to have steadier employment than are members of the LC. They are also likely to be better trained, to work at higher levels of skill and responsibility, and to be better paid. They are, in addition, more likely to aspire to MC status. In many communities, WC and MC people live side by side in similar houses in the same neighborhoods, and it is often difficult to find economic differences between them. In fact, many WC members earn more money than MC members, own their own homes, aspire to send

their children to college, and in many other ways display patterns of behavior that are largely MC.

### *Differences between middle class and working class*

As Harold L. Wilensky (1966) reported in a survey and analysis of class structure research, there are some important differences between the WC and the MC way of life. Although the WC family may enjoy an income of, say, \$15,000 per year, it often requires two jobs and many overtime hours to keep income at that level. The economic situation of the WC family is likely to be less stable, as well. Many WC members move from job to job and have to cope with layoffs, slack seasons, and periods of unemployment. They may be *relatively* better off economically than LC people, but their situation is likely to be more precarious than that of the typical MC family. Like MC families, WC families say they want their children to go to college, but are inclined to see a college education in strictly vocational terms. Although MC parents also see college education paying off in terms of a better job, they also perceive it as leading to a fuller and more enjoyable life and as preparation for "getting along with other people."

Wilensky sees similar differences in choice of housing. Both MC and WC people escape from the city to the suburbs in search of "a better way of life," but for the WC family, owning a suburban tract home is more likely to represent freedom from the landlord and avoidance of racial conflict in the central city. The MC family views a suburban home more in terms of a validation of their MC status. Wilensky reports that WC families are more inclined to do their own repairing and servicing of home appliances and automobiles, whereas MC families hire the work to be done. WC families, he says, are also more likely to take aimless

Sunday drives that end in a "drive-in" with food or film, rather than a dinner in a downtown restaurant. For vacations, WC families are more inclined to remain at home or visit relatives than to travel great distances for planned adventures.

John Brooks (1966) has commented on some of the differences between white-collar and blue-collar families. He contrasts two families who live next door to each other, both in their late twenties with similar, middle-range incomes. Mr. White works for a book-publishing firm, and Mr. Blue is a garage mechanic. The Whites live in an old house they have made over; the Blues live in a small, neat house less than five years old. The Blues' lawn is immaculately trimmed; the Whites' lawn is not mowed as efficiently and is full of gray spots and weeds. The Blues drive a Chevrolet, three years old; the Whites drive a Volkswagen of unknown vintage. The Blues' conversation is liberally sprinkled with references to the television shows they watch; the Whites watch television only occasionally and are reluctant to admit that they do so. The Whites have many, many books, which they even use as a decorating motif; the Blues do not have a book in the house.

The differences between the WC and the MC can be recognized and described, but are hard to measure. If anything, they add up to a difference in aspiration level. Mr. White hopes for advancement within the publishing industry, whereas Mr. Blue will always be a mechanic. Mr. White is striving to become something more than he is, whereas Mr. Blue is interested in security and in maintaining his status quo.

### *Differences between working class and lower class*

According to Wilensky, the differences between life in the LMC and the upper levels

of the WC are not as pronounced as the differences between the WC and the LC. The semi-skilled and unskilled operatives who constitute the LC are plagued by high unemployment rates and have more chaotic work histories. They also encounter more obstacles if and when they try to escape into the upper WC levels or into the MC. They lack sophistication in making purchases, are easily victimized by "easy credit," and are continually in debt. Like the LC throughout the world, they receive less of every good thing that modern society has to offer: economic security, health services, personal safety, living space, opportunity for education, and interesting work. Their typical response to their inhospitable social environment is retreat. They are more likely to eat, drink, and watch television alone. Family life is more likely to be impoverished and unstable, and homes broken by divorce, death, or desertion are a commonplace. Mental illness rates are approximately three times as high as they are in any other social level.

Although these generalizations apply to the LC as a whole, we should recognize that the LC is composed of many diverse groups—probably more than can be encountered in any other social class. We have already referred to semi-skilled and unskilled operatives with poor work histories. There are also migrant workers and sharecroppers, white "hillbillies" in the Appalachians, and chronic welfare cases. Wilensky notes that half of the poor—those with incomes of less than \$3,000 per year—are over 65 years of age, are nonwhite, or are women heads of households, and that a majority of the poor, especially the chronically poor, are white, rural, Southern populations.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Robert J. Havighurst (1970) estimates that the "socially disadvantaged" group in the United States includes about 20 million English-speaking Caucasians, 8 million Negroes, 2 million Spanish-Americans, 700,000 Puerto Ricans, and 500,000 American Indians.

### *The lower-class culture*

American society is basically an MC society. Even the UC conforms to MC norms and values in much of its behavior. The people living in urban and rural slums, the lowest social class, do not have any strong identification with MC values, however, and it is for this reason that they are often described as socially deprived and as alienated from society. The abiding characteristic of LC society is its instability. Whereas the MC and UC people are future-oriented and invest much time and energy in planning and ordering what they expect to do for years to come, people at the lowest levels of the LC live on a day-to-day basis. If the future is considered at all, it is regarded with apathy, fatalism, and the conviction that luck and luck alone determines the course of human events. As Melvin L. Kohn (1969) says, "The essence of higher class position is the belief that one's decisions and actions can be consequential; the essence of the lower class position is the belief that one is at the mercy of forces and people beyond one's control, often beyond one's understanding" [p. 198]. In view of such beliefs, the typical LC individual has little or no confidence in himself and sees little point to making an effort to prepare himself for a better job or to taking any other steps to improve his chances for future success.

The unstable, chaotic quality of the slum culture has been described graphically by Samuel Tenenbaum (1963), who watched what happened when a hotel across the street from his apartment house in New York was taken over by the city government as a hostel for families on relief. The streets and sidewalks around the hotel began to swarm with children engaged in all kinds of energetic and violent play. There were fights, shouting, screaming, and friendliness, all mingled together. Automobiles parked near the hotel were occasionally torn apart and dismantled, with everyone pitching in with evi-

dent enjoyment. Adults leaned out of the window and scolded or shouted approval at the goings-on, or merely drank beer and carried on shouted conversations with their neighbors. These happenings went on far into the night, long after the MC people in Tenenbaum's apartment house had gone to bed. The whole scene was one of turbulence, violence, and instability.

Social life in the MC and WC cultures centers largely around the home, but in the LC culture it is more likely to take place elsewhere: in the street, at street corners, in bars, or at work. The relatively insignificant role played by the home is both a cause and an effect of the diffuseness of life in the LC culture. The MC and WC families work to make their homes comfortable, attractive, and "livable," and UC families do much entertaining in their homes. But LC families regard them primarily as places to eat and sleep. They are little inclined to fix them up or to take any responsibility for their maintenance. The fact that a LC person is more likely to be a renter, rather than an owner, explains some of his lack of interest in maintaining or decorating his home, but even MC people who rent often take a high degree of responsibility in this respect—painting, installing carpeting, and making small repairs, without compensation from the owners.

### *Social-Class Differences in Child-Rearing Patterns*

The most significant differences between cultures are found in the values to which members subscribe, because values determine attitudes, which, in turn, determine behavior. Values are not easy to study, however. For one thing, people take values for granted. As a general rule, they do not make a practice of discussing them, and it is only when we note the choices people make or the kinds of behavior patterns

in which they engage that we become aware that certain values are operating. The easiest and most effective way to approach the study of a culture's values is to study child-rearing patterns. Because people are more likely to be able to discuss how children should be brought up—it is a topic of almost universal interest, particularly in literate societies—data are readily available. Furthermore, comparisons of child-rearing practices reveal differences in implicit value patterns. If there are any real differences in UC, MC, WC, and LC subcultures, therefore, a comparative study of child-rearing practices should find them.

### *The middle class, as contrasted with the working class and the lower class*

Social-class differences in child-rearing patterns appear very early in life. Roberta R. Collard (1971) compared infants who were reared in LC and MC homes and found that MC infants functioned on a more complex cognitive level and engaged in more social play. Social play appears to be a prominent feature in the life of an MC infant. Steven R. Tulkin and Jerome Kagan (1972) compared white WC and MC mothers with respect to the way in which they interacted with their ten-month-old infants. There were no differences in the amount of time that WC and MC mothers spent in close proximity to their infants, nor in the amount of kissing, tickling, and holding, nor in the frequency of prohibitions. MC mothers, however, spent more time face-to-face with their infants, displayed more vocal behavior, initiated more vocalization, followed infant vocalization with comment, imitated infant vocalization, and praised the infants more.<sup>5</sup> MC mothers enter-

<sup>5</sup>Gertrude M. Haugan and Roger W. McIntire (1972) found with infants 3 to 6 months old that their vocalization (a precursor to speech) is evoked most successfully by adult vocal imitation, a form of reinforcement that proved to be more effective than rewards of food or stroking.

tained their infants more often by showing pictures and giving them playthings; they responded more often and more quickly to infants' frets, and their responses tended to be verbal, whereas WC mothers responded with a bottle or a cookie.

When queried, WC mothers were less likely to believe that their infants had adultlike emotions or that they were able to communicate anything. One WC mother who spoke to her child a great deal complained that her friends ridiculed her for "talking to the kid like she was three years old." Indeed, the general WC attitude seemed to be that it was unimportant to talk to children until children could talk. They seemed to hold to a strongly genetic theory of child development and to feel that there was little they could do to affect the way a child would turn out. Tulkin and Kagan noted that this attitude of fatalism may have been related to the mothers' feeling of being powerless to bring about changes in their own environment.

It seems to be a universal finding that parental permissiveness increases as one goes up the social scale and decreases as one goes down. While child abuse is not unknown in MC homes, it is more frequent in WC homes, and LC parents are the worst offenders. The findings of Nuttall, Smith, and Nuttall (1970) are typical of many. Using a Spanish version of a parental behavior survey they found that the higher the social status of families of Puerto Rican secondary school students, the higher the degree to which parents expressed interest and personal involvement in their children as individuals, and, conversely, the lower the degree of social status, the greater the degree of hostility and rejection that characterized parents' relations with their children.

Urie Bronfenbrenner (1958) conducted a survey of research extending over a twenty-five-year period. His observations are as valid today as they were when he wrote them down

over fifteen years ago. The studies agreed that WC and LC consistently favor the use of physical punishment in dealing with discipline problems, whereas MC parents make more use of reasoning, appeals to guilt, and other techniques involving the withholding of love. The studies also showed that parent-child relationships in MC homes are more likely to be based on equalitarian or democratic principles, whereas those in WC and especially in LC homes are oriented more toward maintaining order and exacting obedience.

One implication in these findings is that WC and LC cultures tend to be more shame-oriented, whereas MC society tends to be more guilt-oriented. Another is that WC and LC parents tend to be more authoritarian, preferring to use force and drastic means of control as a way of keeping children in a subordinate and dependent relationship to them. The MC children are expected to learn how to think for themselves and to use guilt feelings as bases for self-control, whereas the more drastic methods of control used with WC and LC children suggest that their parents believe they can only be shocked into acceptable behavior. When MC mothers were asked what they would do if they were told that their child talked in class and caused a disturbance, they were likely to say that they would try to find out why the child felt the need to behave in this way before they decided what to do about the problem. The WC mothers said that they would just give the child a good spanking (Hess, 1964).

Melvin L. Kohn (1963) says that differences between MC and WC-LC patterns of child rearing stem from the fact that MC values center on self-direction, whereas WC and LC values focus on conformity to external prescriptions. Each set of parents, therefore, are attempting to train their children to live in the world they perceive. Kohn points out that MC occupations are ones that require individuals to make many

of their own decisions, without clearly laid-out guidelines, whereas working-class occupations require that one follow explicit rules set down by persons in authority. Self-control is an important value to MC people; persons who lack self-control are unable to think clearly and thus to arrive at good decisions. Conversely, it is disobedience that is likely to cause trouble for WC and LC individuals. Therefore, MC children are more likely to be punished for loss of self-control, whereas WC and LC children are more likely to be punished for disobedience (Kohn, 1959).

Kohn has also worked with Eleanor E. Carroll (1960) on a research study aimed at describing differences between fathers' and mothers' roles in MC and WC families with respect to several dimensions of interaction. When it came to setting limits and controls to children's behavior, a MC mother was more likely to believe that her husband was encouraging and supportive to the children when he did not play the major part in discipline. This was in contrast to the WC home, where the mother felt that the father was more supportive if he *did* play a major role in setting limits.

In MC homes, fathers and mothers shared roles and responsibilities in dealing with children. This was true irrespective of whether the interaction involved love or discipline. The WC homes, however, were more traditional, and parental roles were more sharply differentiated. Love, encouragement, and support are more consistent with the mother's roles, whereas punishment, control, and discipline are considered to be more consistent with the father's role. It is significant, however, that although WC mothers felt that fathers could be firmer in setting limits than they were, there was a tendency for WC fathers to withdraw from problems of child rearing, leaving the entire matter to their wives.

The authors also asked whether children

(who were ten or eleven years old) tried to use their parents as models for their behavior. Results showed that MC boys were more likely to "try to act like" their fathers, whereas almost no WC boys did so. This is further evidence that WC fathers tend to play neutral, uninvolved roles in their families.

### *Cross-cultural research*

Although social-class distinctions in America can be noted by any objective observer who wants to take the trouble, they are often submerged and confused, perhaps because of our widespread conviction that such distinctions really do not matter and that individuals should really be judged on other bases than their background. Whatever the reason, all an observer needs to do is to spend some time abroad in order to realize that social-class lines are more sharply drawn in cultures in which traditional values are the norm. Herbert Nabors (1972) reports that in France, differences between social groups—men and women, parents and children, social classes, etc.—are the *primary* bases for social interaction, whereas in North America, how an individual *behaves* is considered more important than the group with which he is affiliated.

In other respects, however, there is considerable similarity in MC child-rearing practices across cultures. In other words, differences between MC and LC practices noted in the United States appear to be universal and not confined to the North American continent. E. Terry Prothro (1966) used interviewers to ask Greek mothers about their child-rearing practices and about other patterns of behavior in their families. His results, some of which are presented in Table 8-1 show differences and trends consistent with the findings of studies done in the United States. The Greek MC mothers are more affectionate and more permissive than WC mothers, who are, in turn,

**Table 8-1.** *Differences in Child-Rearing Practices among Greek Middle-Class, Working-Class, and Peasant Mothers with Children four-and-one-half to six-and-one-half Years of Age (Prothro, 1966).*

Interview questions on child-rearing practices	Percentages responding positively to interview questions		
	Middle class (urban)	Working class (urban)	Peasant class (rural)
Insists on immediate obedience	51	81	99
Gives affection or reward if child performs task	28	16	2
Prefers discipline by explaining and reasoning	37	12	8
Believes physical punishment is useful	42	56	71
Spanked child more than once during past 2 weeks	42	61	72
Admits she makes empty threats	35	72	85
Hopes child will attend university	89	50	13
Father helped take care of infant	54	51	25
Father helps discipline child	36	27	21
Father makes most of family decisions	30	49	81
Father does not consult mother on money matters	30	53	84

more affectionate than peasant mothers. The latter, who would correspond to LC in America, are much more traditional than the city mothers. They are more likely to play subordinate roles in their families, which are dominated by their husbands. There is more sharing of responsibility for child care and family decisions in the urban families, especially in those that are MC.

In a study of Javanese families, Kurt Danziger (1960a) found that there was a direct relationship between the amount of independence expected of children and the social class of the parents. Oriental women are much more inclined, than are European or North American women, to carry their young children around with them. Such a practice would, of course, be inconsistent with developing feelings of independence in children, and one would predict that MC mothers would stop the practice sooner than LC mothers. Danziger's findings are consistent with that prediction. The UMC Javanese mothers said, on the average, that chil-

dren should not be carried about after 18 months of age; LMC mothers set the age at two and a half; and LC mothers said that children should be carried until about three and a half. The MC mothers were more inclined to favor psychological punishment, whereas LC mothers were more likely to favor physical punishment. There were similar differences with respect to the age at which children were expected to take care of their own things and put them away in an orderly fashion. UMC mothers expected this to occur when the children were about six; LMC mothers when they were about eight and a half; and LC mothers when the children were well over ten years of age.

Danziger (1966b) also found differences in the expected direction when it comes to scheduling. The MC people in North America and Europe are rather insistent on promptness and getting things done on time. The MC society works on schedule. One goes to work or school on time; meals are served at a certain



hour; bedtime must come at the proper time if one is to get enough sleep before the time comes to get up and go to school and work again. Very likely some of this expected punctuality is nonfunctional—that is, punctuality is demanded and expected for its own sake, and not because of any practical value. Most scheduling, however, is not an instance of order for its own sake, but is rather a social device to enable people to accomplish their tasks and meet their personal needs without getting into each other's way and without being let down or disappointed. When buses do not show up on time, or employers are late with pay checks, awkward situations are created, and people have to remake their plans and find some way to cope with the unexpected problems.

Nonindustrialized societies, like those of much of Asia and Latin America, have the reputation of being unconcerned about scheduling. Danziger's research suggests that much of this observed difference may be due to the fact that MC norms and values are less in evidence in those countries, for he found that UMC mothers in Java, like those of the United States thirty years before, were insistent on schedules for their children. Only 5% of these mothers said they had not prescribed an eating and sleeping schedule, as contrasted with 45% of the LMC mothers, and 75% to 90% of the LC mothers. When they were asked when they first started to institute feeding schedules, virtually the same percentages of the mothers said "at birth."

### *Social class and social perception*

If differences in child-rearing have any significance, they should show up in the way in which children view the world. Leonard Berkowitz (1971), in a review of research dealing with television viewing on the part of children, noted that LC children are much more likely to believe that television characters are real

people than are MC children. Their tendency to make literal interpretations, however, prevents their being aware of the motivation underlying the behavior of the characters they are watching. This is understandable because of the low esteem with which personal feelings are held in an environment where deprivation and suffering are everyone's fate.

Eugene S. Gollin (1958) conducted an experiment to test the hypothesis that, in contrast to MC children, LC children would show less interest in and concern for the feelings of others and would make fewer attempts to understand their motives. In Gollin's experiment, UMC and LC adolescents saw a film in which the main character, a boy, did two good things and two bad things. Gollin was interested in determining the extent to which his subjects use "inference", that is, would think of events occurring outside the context of the situations shown in the film that might serve to explain the boy's inconsistent behavior. He also wanted to see whether his subjects would try to develop concepts that would attempt to explain the diversity of behavior themes in the same person. He found, among other things, that subjects who were sixteen years old were more inclined to do both of these things than were thirteen-year-olds, who, in turn, were more inclined to do so than were ten-year-olds. In other words, the willingness and the ability to use insight and imagination in analyzing the behavior of others appear to increase with age and may be considered to be characteristic of a socially mature pattern of behavior. When Gollin divided his subjects according to the occupations of their parents into a UMC and a LC group, he found that UMC children were more socially mature at all the ages tested. Among thirteen-year-olds, for example, 73% of the UMC boys made use of inference in explaining the behavior of the boy in the film, as contrasted with only 20% of the LC boys. At sixteen years, 84% of the

UMC girls attempted to develop concepts in order to explain the inconsistencies of the boy's behavior, whereas only 52% of the LC girls did so.

## *Occupational and Educational Aspects of Social Class*

### *Social class and occupational status*

The research studies cited in the last few pages have used occupational status as an index for social class. Actually, occupational status is only one criterion of social status. We have already mentioned some of the other criteria: where one lives, for instance. Communities whose populations cover a range of social classes have rather well-defined residential areas that can be considered as UMC, WC, and LC or whatever. Some communities have become homogeneous, particularly in the suburban areas of large cities, where communities that are almost entirely WC or UMC may be found.

We have also mentioned affluence and income. We noted that LC persons draw their income from investments, rents, and capital gains, whereas UMC persons use fees, salaries, and business profits as sources of income. There is a status hierarchy in the way salaries are quoted, ranging from an annual (UMC) to a weekly (LMC) basis. Members of the WC and the LC are paid by the hour.

It is fairly obvious that income and occupation are interrelated. Fees are received by physicians, lawyers, dentists, and architects, who are also members of the UMC. Skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled workers are members of the WC or the LC and are paid by the hour. Salaries are received by white-collar employees, who are members of the middle classes. Occupational status can thus be considered to be a fairly accurate index of an individual's social status.

Another index related to both social and occupational status is the number of years of schooling completed. Persons with education beyond the bachelor's degree are likely to be members of the professions and hence UMC, as are a great many people who have completed four years of college. Persons with some college work short of the bachelor's degree are mostly in the middle ranges of the MC, whereas those who have completed high school are likely to be LMC. Some WC people have completed high school, but many have not, whereas many LC people have had no high school education at all. In general, younger persons in each of these categories have had more education than the older ones. For instance, it is quite common to find successful, middle-aged businessmen who are UMC and who have had a year or two of college or have completed only high school. In the LC, most young people have had a year or so of high school (usually unsuccessful), whereas older people generally have not completed grammar school or may, in some instances, be illiterate.

Since both occupational level and the number of years of education completed are highly and positively correlated with other indices of social status, they are often used together or singly in research studies as *prima facie* evidence of membership in the appropriate social classes (Hollingshead & Redlich, 1958).

### *Education and social class*

We noted at the beginning of this chapter that education provides the means whereby LC and WC youth can become MC. Entry into occupations over a certain basic level is likely to be governed by the amount of education possessed by the applicant, and, inasmuch as occupational level is a major determinant of both income and social status, movement up the

social ladder can be accomplished by completing educational requirements.

Although education may offer an escape from the slum environment, it is by no means an easy one, as many observers of educational and social processes have noted (Havighurst, 1970; McCandless, 1967; Tenenbaum, 1963; Westby-Gibson, 1965). Schools, as these observers point out, are MC institutions run by MC people along MC lines. They teach MC values and attitudes and reward MC behavior. The LC person, adult or child, is bound to have some difficulty in adapting his behavior to the demands of the schools. Values and attitudes cannot be put on or taken off as easily as a coat. The LC person who succeeds in school is able to do so only by making some major changes in the way he sees himself and the world around him. In effect, he can succeed, as schools are presently constituted, only by becoming a different kind of person—a MC person.

In an earlier discussion of shame and guilt cultures we described the kinds of sanctions and punishments that are visited on members of a shame culture who dare to behave differently, particularly those who make gestures that indicate they have intentions of entering another culture. Such individuals are subject to all kinds of harassment. The LC boy who takes school seriously is subjected to such comments as: "What's the matter with you, think you're too good for us?", or "Fred's some kind of a teacher's pet!", or "Books are for sissy kissers!" (usually in stronger terms than these). If his need for affiliation is at all strong, and if he places any great value in keeping the good will of his playmates and peers, his interests in educational success will crumble under the impact of such ridicule.

Still another problem is the behavior that is characteristic of MC teachers, who do not realize what it takes for an LC child to make a serious attempt to succeed at school work.

All things considered, the task of escaping from the LC by way of public education is one that can be accomplished only by persons of strong character who have a firm grip on reality and an unusual degree of confidence and self-assurance. In light of these considerations, it is surprising how many actually do escape.

One study that shows how educational level, child-rearing practices, and generalized attitudes toward the social environment are interrelated was conducted by Sol L. Garfield and Malcolm Helper (1962), who studied the attitudes of UMC and LC mothers, using the Parent Attitude Research Instrument (PARI), a questionnaire that explores various aspects of parental relationships with children. They found that LC mothers expressed a greater fear of harming the child and were more inclined to foster his dependency. Not only did they attempt to shelter their children from influences outside the family, but they themselves led more secluded lives than did the MC mothers, and were more inclined to look upon themselves as martyrs. At the same time they expressed more irritability than MC mothers and felt it was necessary to "break the child's will" in order to exercise more adequate control over the child. Children who come from such a background understandably experience difficulties in responding to teachers' demands that they take some initiative in learning tasks and problem-solving behavior.

A number of writers in the field of education (e.g., Kohl, 1967; Neill, 1960) maintain that if the learning environment is truly permissive, the child will eventually generate motives that will lead to his voluntarily attempting to learn the basic skills that are needed not only for success in school, but also for survival in an urbanized, industrialized society. This idea has been challenged by other writers on the grounds that it is hopelessly unrealistic. Robert J. Havighurst (1970), for example, notes that Herbert S. Kohl (1967) reported considerable

success in getting 36 slum children to write by giving them a chance to express their own experiences and feelings, but raises this question: "How far can a slum child (or a middle-class child) go toward mastery of arithmetic, of English sentence style, of knowledge of science and history, if he is motivated only by his drive to express his feelings, or possibly by his desire to please his friendly and permissive teacher?" [p. 319].

Jonathan Kozol (1972), though a severe critic of traditional educational practices, is even more scathing in criticizing well-meaning, but overly permissive and accepting MC teachers who sincerely believe that a child should not be taught until he asks to be taught, and who, therefore, make no demands on the children from slum environments who are in their schools. It is unpardonable, he says, for such a teacher to "sit and smile in some sort of cloud of mystical, wide-eyed, nondirective and inscrutable meditation—and do nothing" [p. 32], and he castigates the eager, "free school," well-educated volunteer, who comes from a UC or UMC background and "who is most determined that poor kids should make clay vases, weave Indian headbands, play with Polaroid cameras, and climb over geodesic domes" [p. 32].

Havighurst maintains that such permissive, open, and free-style methods of education work, if they work at all, with socially advantaged children—children from WC and MC homes in which there is order and pattern to everyday life. In contrast to LC children, advantaged children, he says, have relatively stronger egos and superegos. In other words, they are in better contact with social reality and are guilt-oriented rather than shame-oriented; hence, they are able to function in a self-initiating way, even when teachers in free-school situations, like Neill's Summerhill, put no pressure on them to learn. The haphazard and anarchic pattern of life that prevails in many slum homes gives

the LC child nothing to fall back on, and he reacts to free-school situations with behavior that may be passive, aggressive, or playful, but which is unconcerned with the difficult and demanding tasks of learning to read, write, and cipher.

### *Attitudes toward the social environment*

The MC parent's emphasis on independence training rests on the assumption that the environment can be controlled and mastered. The MC children are taught social skills only partly because of the pleasure they may derive from using them. The main purpose in this training lies in the practical use that may be made of such skills. The MC people are keenly aware that finding one's way and succeeding in a complex social world depends to a large degree on mastery of a full range of social skills—skills relating to communication, negotiation, argument, agreement, compromise, anticipation of the behavior and attitudes of others, as well as the more formal skills, such as good manners and courtesy. Coping with the social environment presents a series of problems to the MC person, but they are problems that can be understood and solved, if the formulas are used intelligently.

The LC person, on the other hand, tends to approach the social environment with much more of a defeatist attitude. Whereas the MC person thinks of society as in the main good and as a potential source of security and personal rewards, the LC person thinks of it as a source of harassment, failure, and rejection. Instead of trying to understand society's complications, he tries to isolate himself and to build defenses against getting involved with it more than is minimally required. It is quite understandable, therefore, why an LC parent would teach his child to hate and fear society and its institutions, which seem to him to be run largely by MC people for their own benefit.

*Attitudes toward school*

These attitudes toward the social environment determine the attitudes toward the school. The MC child learns to see school first as an exciting opportunity to learn more about the world around him. Then, as the excitement and newness of learning wears off, generally about the middle grades in elementary school, he comes to see school experiences as absolutely necessary to further success and happiness in life. In subtle ways he is led to realize that people who fail in life (usually LC persons) do so because they have not completed the recommended minimum of education. He may secretly admire or may occasionally openly emulate children who challenge the educational establishment in dramatic ways, but he realizes that failure in school amounts to a life sentence to failure. A small proportion of MC children do not make the grade and become high school dropouts, but we are talking here about the vast majority who resist distraction and who go on to graduate from high school and enter college, loyal to the MC way of life.

The LC child is likely to see the school as a potentially hostile, threatening institution, to which he has been sentenced to spend endless hours, months, and years. His best defense, his mother is likely to tell him, is to behave himself. If he behaves himself "they" will let him alone. This is true only in part, because if "they," the teachers, are at all dedicated and competent, they will insist that he learn the three R's, gain some understanding of science, geography, and government, and practice MC social techniques of cooperation, leadership, ease in communication, and the like. Many, if not most, LC children thwart their teachers' goals and aspirations by remaining quiet and compliant, by meticulously conforming to the details of teachers' demands, without accepting the underlying rationale and philosophy. One cannot learn what one does not believe. A few,

made conspicuous by the very vehemence of their hostility, rebel openly, are disruptive and destructive, and join the list of "problem cases" that occupy a major part of the attention of school social workers, psychologists, attendance officers, and other personnel assigned to deal with school failures. If these aggressive children encounter weak teachers, or schools in which top or middle leadership is ineffective, they serve as foci of dissension and disorder in creating anarchic conditions in the classroom, on the playground, and in the halls and cafeterias.

School personnel, being MC, and subscribing to the attitudes and values of a different subculture, are generally unaware of or insensitive to the more basic aspects of the problem. Since they have never been LC and have little idea of how an LC person views the world, they tend to treat each child as though he were a product of an MC home, conversant with MC attitudes and placing an MC value on education. Most school people think of themselves as being democratically motivated and, indeed, set great store on teaching the attitudes and techniques of democratic living. To many of them, this means treating each child alike to the point of ignoring the differences we have been discussing. Consequently, when they encounter behavior that is quite normal from the standpoint of the LC culture, they are shocked, appalled, hostile, outraged, anxious, or frightened—whatever their characteristic reaction to social stress happens to be. Some react by tightening controls and becoming more demanding and punitive; others abandon normal controls and contribute to an anarchy that makes any kind of positive behavior impossible.

In any event, most MC teachers tend to behave in ways that confirm the rather pessimistic expectations of the typical LC student. He enters school expecting that it will be an unhappy experience—that is, he expects to fail,

to have trouble with the teachers, to find out that other students do not like him, to be ignored, or to be punished. In general, school personnel fall into the trap of reinforcing behavior consistent with these expectations, to the end that the LC child's approach to school is in the nature of a "self-fulfilling prophecy." His expectations to be disappointed and to fail lead him to display the kind of behavior that causes teachers to be disappointed in him or treat him as a potential failure.

School personnel also have their self-fulfilling prophecies that are consistent with and complement the expectations of LC children. Partly because of their MC values and partly as a result of real experiences with apathetic or negative LC children, they come to anticipate failure or problem behavior or both from LC children, and, as a consequence, do not approach them with the same kind of optimism that they do MC children. Furthermore, as the research of Nettie R. Bartel (1971) shows, teachers of LC children apparently encourage passive, rather than self-directive behavior.

What aggravates the problem still further is the tendency of many school departments to put their least experienced teachers in slum schools (Green, 1966). Positions in MC schools are considered in the nature of rewards for services loyally and obediently rendered. Hence, the MC children who are already motivated to work hard at the tasks of education get the more experienced teachers, and the LC children who need special care and attention get the inexperienced ones. The various federally sponsored and financed antipoverty campaigns have corrected this imbalance to some degree by making it possible to offer premium pay for teachers willing to work with slum children in special projects, but the seniority rule persists nevertheless in many, if not most, large cities.

Although we have gone to some lengths to show how difficult it is for LC children to use

the schools to escape from LC status, we should nevertheless be aware that a considerable degree of upward mobility does take place. Some LC children discover through the schools that a different and more promising way of life exists and that it can be attained through education. Other LC children are reached through the personal interest shown them by some of their teachers. One of the characteristics of a slum home is that the ratio of children to adults is very high. This means that the average child receives considerably less attention than he would in an MC family with fewer children and a lower child-adult ratio. Many LC parents are genuinely fond of children, but the LC adult is likely to be preoccupied with coping with life's problems, and a harassed, tired, and often distraught parent has little time for positive interaction with children. LC children quickly learn to keep out of the way and to make as little fuss as possible. In a school, things may be different, if the teacher has enough time and is sufficiently motivated to work with a child on his learning problems. Many an LC child has learned to be enthusiastic about learning through imitating the behavior and attitudes of a much-admired teacher.

A still further contribution lies in the atmosphere of the school. Although it is admittedly MC and foreign to the experience of many LC children, it may at the same time provide the only secure and dependable experience in their lives. This is particularly true of slum children who come from highly unstable homes where they are not sure whether their father is going to be living with them tomorrow, or what kind of man their mother will bring home with her at night, or whether adults will draw knives and break bottles fighting in a drunken rage, or where there is little violence, but just a dirty, messy chaos.

What we have said about the lives and experiences of LC, slum children applies to a lesser degree to children from WC homes. The

problem here seems to be largely that of a low level of intellectual stimulation. The progress that children make in school seems to be highly correlated to the number of books in the home, and it is in this respect that WC and MC homes are likely to differ. WC homes are likely to have fewer children than LC homes, as well as fewer absent fathers, more stability and security, and a stronger support for education, at least in terms of its more practical goals. Furthermore, as we pointed out earlier, WC adults strongly and firmly support the middle-class core ideology, which is generally favorable to education, as long as it does not become too intellectual. As a result of all these factors, WC children are more responsive to school influences than LC children are. Although proportionately fewer of them are successful in school and go on to college, as compared with the proportions of MC youth, a sizable percentage do come to accept the school's goals as their own. In fact, most elementary and secondary school teachers have their origins in the working class and the lower middle class.

## *Upward Mobility*

### *Self-help and the lower class*

In recent years a great deal of interest has developed in the possibility of finding ways to help the poor improve their lot. The traditional approach to the LC and their problems has been based on the assumption "the poor are always with us." Since poverty was considered to be the inevitable lot of most of mankind, there was nothing anyone could do about it except give an occasional financial contribution to make their conditions easier to bear. The growing political and economic democracy of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has, however, changed much of that thinking. Making education readily available on a free or low-cost basis has enabled millions of the poor to

become economically secure or even affluent MC citizens, thus showing that poverty was caused by, or at least related to, the lack of opportunity for self-improvement.

Large numbers of the poor, however, do not improve themselves even though the opportunity is within their grasp. Just how available opportunity is to the average slum youth is a matter of conjecture and controversy. It is easy to show that school prejudice against the slum child, be he white, Negro, Puerto Rican, or Indian, is a reality, and it is tempting to explain lack of self-improvement solely on those grounds. The fact remains, however, that millions of people from the ranks of the poor do indeed find ways to improve their lot. To the behavioral scientists, this means that there must be some difference between those who improve and those who do not. To the social reformer, the politician, the civic leader, and the interested citizen, the problem is more likely to be seen in terms of how the residual poor may be led to undertake self-improvement. The number of failures encountered by the latter group suggests that a prerequisite to helping the poor help themselves may lie in the direction of a better understanding of their motivation, as well as the problems with which they must cope.

### *Lower class and n Ach*

One possible explanation may be drawn from the research dealing with the need to achieve (*n Ach*) we described in Chapter 5. It would seem reasonable that LC people who take advantage of schools and improve themselves have a higher degree of *n Ach* than those who do not. It would also seem reasonable to assume that LC people who do not develop *n Ach* do not do so, because achieving types of behavior run counter to the norms of their subculture. There has been little research regarding differences in *n Ach* between LC individuals who take advantage of opportunities to

move up socially and those who do not. One study by Bernard C. Rosen (1959) suggests that levels of *n Ach* differ from one LC ethnic group to another, although he did find that his LC subjects generally had a lower level of *n Ach* than middle-class groups. His results, which are reported in Table 8-2, showed that LC members of cultural groups that were "upward mobile," such as Jews and Greeks, scored higher than those who were relatively static, such as French-Canadians and Negroes. One interesting finding that emerges from his research is the sharp difference in *n Ach* between LMC and LC groups. It would seem that the LC individual who has decided to advance must be rather markedly different than the one who accepts his low status.

*Emotional problems and upward mobility*

It is quite likely that LC individuals who strive to rise differ in other ways as well. Comparative studies of high and low school achievers in the

United States and other industrialized countries routinely show that high achievers generally have fewer emotional problems, are less anxious, and have a better adjustment than low achievers. Few studies, however, have included controls for social class. One study that suggests that achievement may come at some psychological cost was conducted among the LC and WC students of a school in Brazil, where findings ran contrary to expectations, for high achievers reported more psychological problems and displayed more anxiety than low achievers (Lindgren & Mello, 1965). Similarly, Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck (1950) found that boys from an LC neighborhood who did not get into trouble with the police or with school authorities had more emotional problems, were less well adjusted (as indicated by personality test scores), and presumably experienced a higher level of anxiety than those who did get into trouble. If staying out of trouble and succeeding in school is as consistent with MC patterns of behavior, it would appear that LC

*Table 8-2. Mean n Ach Scores Reported for Various Ethnic Groups Subdivided According to Social Class (Rosen, 1959, as reported by McClelland, 1961)*

Ethnic group	Social class			Means for ethnic group	N
	UMC	LMC	LC		
French					
Canadian	5.00 <sup>a</sup>	5.92	3.26	3.85	61
Italian	4.43	7.94	3.75	4.78	74
White					
Protestant	6.85	6.00	4.03	5.19	120
Negro	6.36	4.00	2.67	3.40	65
Jew	5.06	5.41	6.00	5.53	57
Greek	4.17	7.13	4.67	5.81	47
Means for social classes	5.69	6.34	3.78	4.76	
N's	77	106	214		424

<sup>a</sup>One case only.



individuals who strive to move up the social status ladder pay some price in the form of increased anxiety.

The heightened level of anxiety may very well be due to the ambiguity of the situation faced by the upwardbound LC child. The LC child who stays at his own social level faces much less ambiguity. He knows what he is and where he is going. He may not like what he knows, but he does know and thus does not have to face the task of learning the values of a different culture and of continually redefining himself in those terms. As contrasted with MC children, such a child has less assurance that he will succeed and is continually plagued with doubts as to whether he will attain the sought-after self-image. The encouragement he receives from his teachers when he shows progress must be balanced against the lack of support and downright hostility he receives from his peer group. It is hardly surprising that the upward-mobile LC child is likely to experience more than his share of anxiety.

Such a child, however, will also experience anxiety if he does not make progress. The LC people are continually being admonished by society to try to improve themselves—to be good workers, good soldiers, good students, to keep sober and stay out of trouble. Such reminders would be a source of anxiety for most MC people, just as they are for the upward-mobile LC child. A great many LC people have, however, developed a number of effective defenses against such anxiety. If one's condition is perceived as being beyond one's control, then one does not need to feel guilty about one's lowly status. Such attitudes also help to "structure" the environment, so that problems are seen as consisting of sharply differentiated, simple issues, rather than as ambiguous and complex. The LC individual thus learns to view the environment in terms of good and evil, the "good guys" and the "bad guys," free of all encumbering nuances and ambiguities.

### *Emotional problems and status inconsistencies*

Changes in status are likely to be stressful. This is true irrespective of whether the change is in an upward or downward direction. It is also to be expected that such stresses would have some kind of effect on overt behavior. Donald I. Warren (1970) maintains, as a result of his research on reports of "flying saucers" and other unidentified flying objects (UFOs), that stresses resulting from status inconsistencies are a major factor in the reporting of UFO sightings. Status inconsistencies are described by Warren as occurring when elements in an individual's social and economic background are out of phase with one another. A woman assistant professor of engineering, holding a Ph.D. degree would, for example, experience a high degree of status inconsistency, for she would have a high degree of education, a moderate income, and come from an "outgroup," as far as engineers are concerned. A Harvard graduate, son of an Episcopal bishop, working as a longshoreman would also have a high degree of status inconsistency.

Warren's survey found that college-educated white males with low incomes were five times more likely to report UFOs than were low-educated men in the same income bracket, while college-educated white men with only medium incomes were 16 times as likely to see UFOs as their status-consistent counterparts. Warren concluded, therefore, that "it is not the uneducated, credulous or the uninformed individual who reports saucers. Rather, it is the individual whose reward structure is out of line with his investment" [p. 603]. Warren maintained that the tendency to report UFOs is a result of stresses generated by the need to anticipate and live with social norms associated with two or more very different kinds of status categories. Also contributing to such stresses are the status-inconsistent individual's feeling

of marginality and social alienation, coupled with problems in attempting to work out coherent sets of beliefs and values relevant to his several incompatible identities and reference groups.

### *Authoritarian attitudes and class structure*

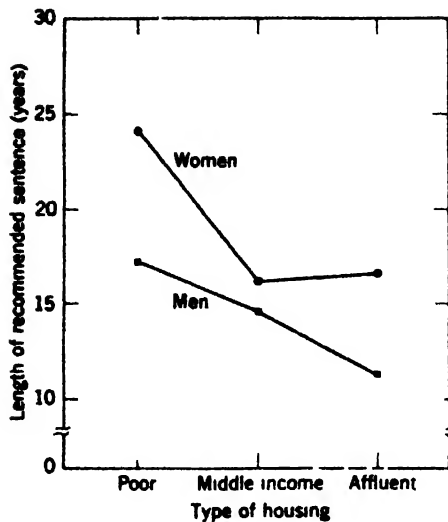
A number of studies show that persons rating low in social class are more likely to display authoritarian attitudes than those of higher status. MacKinnon and Centers (1956), for example, interviewed respondents in downtown Los Angeles, using an abbreviated form of the F scale, and classified them according to education, occupational status, ethnic background, and social class. They found that people who identified themselves as UC and MC were much less authoritarian than those who identified themselves as WC or LC. People who identified themselves as "poor" were twice as likely to score high on the F scale as were people who said they were "wealthy" or "average plus." People who completed "some grade school" were four times as likely to score high on the F scale as were people who said they had completed college. Similar differences appeared between unskilled workers and professional men.

Seymour Martin Lipset (1959) surveyed a large number of studies relating to political attitudes and behavior in the WC and the LC and found that the evidence rather conclusively showed that, despite popular opinion, WC and LC groups tended to prefer authoritarian rather than democratic modes of behavior. Lipset attributed this preference to the tendency of low levels of social status and education to predispose individuals to prefer extremist, intolerant, and drastic forms of behavior, behavior that is more characteristic of authoritarian than democratic or egalitarian modes. He said that

the historical success that Communists and Socialists have had with the WC group can be explained in terms of their espousal of direct action, rather than their endorsement of democratic and egalitarian values. He also pointed out that there is a close connection between low social status and conservative, fundamentalist religion. This class division among church membership has created a dilemma for clergy of the more liberal churches, who tend to be liberal in their politics as well as in their religion, and who have often wanted to disseminate their social gospel among members of the lower social classes. The latter, however, tend to resist the message, because they generally prefer absolutist and authoritarian ministers who preach of hellfire and salvation and the need to make a choice between God and Satan.

Lipset attributed this orientation on the part of LC and WC members in part to the fact that they were as children exposed to environments characterized by aggressiveness, punishment, and general lack of love, environments that foster race prejudice and authoritarianism.

One of the many studies indicating a predilection of LC members for punitivity and other authoritarian attitudes is a survey conducted under the direction of John R. Snortum (1971) of residents of three types of housing tracts: poor, middle-income, and affluent. Respondents were asked, "If you were in a position to write the laws, what prison sentence would you assign to the average case in each of the following law violations?" They were then given a list of ten crimes: automobile theft, bad checks, rape, embezzlement, prostitution, drug addiction, child molesting, child neglect, robbery, and murder. As Figure 8-3 shows, respondents living in the poorest area, and of the lowest social class, were inclined to be more punitive and to indicate a preference for longer sentences. Female LC respondents also tended to guess that a higher percentage of inmates



**Figure 8-3.** Mean length of prison sentence judged appropriate for a list of ten crimes by men and women residing in three categories of housing (Snortum, 1971)

released from prison would be back behind the bars within two years of their release

### *Mexican-American laborers: A static, lower-class subculture*

A brief summary of the results of a survey conducted by Horacio Ulibarri (1966) of the University of New Mexico, who interviewed a sample of sixty-five Spanish-speaking migrant and ex-migrant agricultural workers in the Southwestern States, is relevant here. Ulibarri's study draws together a number of the concepts presented in this chapter and shows how they are interrelated. No single subcultural group in America can be considered to be wholly representative of any social class, and Ulibarri's group of respondents is no exception. Much of what they say, however, does illustrate both the values that characterize LC groups and the problems they face as a consequence of these values.

This similarity to other LC groups appears most strongly with respect to the Mexican-American attitudes toward education. Although their lack of education was perhaps their greatest single handicap with regard to getting and holding worthwhile jobs, they seemed unaware that it actually was a major factor. When asked if they would attend tuition-free adult education classes if any were to be established, they said, 'Yes, but we are too old to learn any more, or I am too stupid to learn.'

When it came to education for their children, their attitudes seemed to be more positive. They said that they wanted their children to become lawyers, doctors, or 'at least teachers,' because, as they put it, they did not want their children to have to work as hard as they did. When pressed, the majority of the parents admitted, however, that they doubted whether their children would finish high school. These doubts were reflected by the children as well, and neither parents nor children seemed much upset by this. The parents in the group had completed an average of about five years of education, and the children tended to drop out about three or four years beyond the level completed by their parents. There seemed to be a complete lack of concern for the bleak economic future the children would face because of educational deficiencies. Instead, there was a preoccupation with immediate economic problems.

The workers expressed considerable anxiety about obtaining work. Most of them felt that they were not making enough money to sustain their families, and believed that the government should develop projects that would provide them with job opportunities. During the growing season, a worker might make as much as seventy dollars a week, but during the off season, he would be lucky to make twenty-five dollars. In spite of the fact that hard times were an annual recurrence, money earned during

peak seasons was not put aside. None of the workers had any savings or any money in the bank. When they had money, they spent it impulsively on such items as television sets and encyclopedias.

Most of the Mexican-Americans had as little as possible to do with the government and were unaware of any of the types of governmental aid available. There was no interest in taking advantage of government opportunities for retraining in new skills. Each person seemed resigned to his fate of having to do the hardest kind of menial work and considered himself fortunate if any job at all were offered. Although they were willing to have their earnings supplemented by the distribution of free commodities or food stamp programs, none of them expressed a desire to become a public welfare client.

On the positive side, family relations were generally good. Families stayed together, drawn by need to share what little they had. They were, in general, closely knit units, in which all members appeared to enjoy considerable status and esteem and showed mutual concern for each other. Families appeared to be concerned entirely about the present and seemed to be content that they were together at the moment. Indeed, the self-satisfaction that families expressed may have had something to do with their unwillingness to take any action, individually or as a family, to improve their situation or solve the problems that faced them. Although the members of the family were concerned about the fact that their resources of food, clothing, and shelter were much less than satisfactory, their reaction tended to be along the lines of "I wish I could do more, but what can I do?"

### *The problem of the lower-class immigrant*

There is also a mutually reinforcing interaction between the way in which MC people regard

LC people and the way in which the latter come to regard themselves. This phenomenon is probably characteristic of MC and LC everywhere and has appeared in a number of research studies of social-class attitudes. One such study was concerned with North African immigrants to Israel. These immigrants are educationally, professionally, and economically disadvantaged in comparison with the majority of the population who had come from Europe. Judith T. Shuval (1966) found that immigrants to Israel from Europe and the Middle East had negative attitudes toward North African immigrants. They were inclined, for example, to view the latter as being "aggressive," dirty, and uncultured, and as having undesirable personal traits. For their part, the North Africans agreed. Sixty percent of both European and North African immigrants said that they would prefer to have other European immigrants as neighbors, but only 19% of North Africans said that they wanted other North Africans in the neighborhood. Shuval concluded that her data confirmed George Herbert Mead's (1934) theory that group members are likely to internalize whatever the prevalent stereotype says about them, even though that stereotype may be a negative one.

The failure of LC members to improve their lot, therefore, is partly the result of their accepting the prevailing belief that they are inferior and inadequate. This belief thus effectively blocks attempts at self-betterment; after all, there is no point in trying, if one is going to fail. This belief may also have the effect, as we have noted, of a "self-fulfilling prophecy." On those occasions when an LC person makes a gesture of self-improvement, he does so expecting to fail, and this feeling is shared by his friends and relatives. It is only when an LC person is able to turn his back on culture, family, and friends that he is able to free himself from the handicap of this negative stereotype.

*Summary*

Social systems have a way of shaping social motives. These systems consist of organized and unorganized social units, which may be divided into positions having rights and obligations. An individual's status is ordinarily influenced by the position he holds but is in any event influenced by the way in which others in the social unit perceive and value him. Status is a reflection of an individual's power and prestige, and is also affected by the exclusiveness of the position he holds. Individuals who occupy certain positions are expected to play the roles appropriate to those positions, and hence must be properly qualified. People occupying positions in a social system at approximately the same status level often find that they have more in common with one another than they do with people in positions above or below them. This mutual attraction within certain broad status levels results in the groupings known as social classes. The boundaries of social classes in America are relatively permeable, but the boundaries of other types of groups, such as castes, are less so. Social status systems are universal and may be found not only in all types of human groups, but among animals as well. Such systems are not maintained exclusively by pressure from above," but by the participation and collaboration, tacit or otherwise, of group members at all levels.

Although systems of labeling social classes vary, it is common practice to recognize upper, middle, working, and lower classes, here designated as UC, MC, WC, and LC. Social class differences tend to be correlated with a wide range of variables, including the prevalence of various kinds of problem behavior, an *Ach*, an *Aff*, life style, personality traits, authoritarianism, and child-rearing patterns. The various social classes may also be said to represent subcultures within the larger national culture.

The MC, also termed the white-collar class, is the largest social class in America and has the most influence in terms of norms, values, attitudes, and behavior patterns. MC individuals have a high regard for education, thrift, self-improvement, cleanliness, family life, home ownership, responsibility, and respectability. There is also a strong emphasis on future orientation, control of impulses, and the channeling of hostility into socially acceptable forms of behavior.

The UC constitutes only a small fraction of the population and consists of members of families which have inherited prestige and affluence, usually over a span of several generations. UC individuals tend to be less competitive than MC, because their family connections give them security of position. Women tend to be more influential at this level than at other class levels. The MC women have more status than WC women, who, in turn, have more status than LC women.

The WC individuals are likely to be better educated and more highly trained than LC members. They may live in MC neighborhoods and may actually earn more money than many MC individuals, although their employment tends to be less stable. Leisure-time activities of WC and MC people are likely to differ. There is a tendency for MC activities to be more intellectual and more active, and for WC activities to be more passive and to involve socializing with relatives and friends. In contrast to the LC, however, the WC appears to be closer to the MC pattern.

Individuals in the LC receive less of every good thing that modern society has to offer: economic security, health services, personal safety, living space, opportunity for education, and interesting work. Their usual reaction to their many problems tends to be that of apathy, retreat, and resignation, although violence and turbulence are more common in this class than in any other.

Studies of child-rearing patterns show that MC parents tend to socialize more intensively with their children, are more permissive, and stress self-control and individual responsibility for behavior. LC parents tend to be more punitive, and to stress obedience. Analyses of roles of parents show that WC fathers tend to be less involved in child rearing than do MC fathers.

Studies of child-rearing practices in other countries have produced findings similar to those in the United States, in that MC families tend to be more affectionate and permissive, less punitive, and to involve fathers in child care more than LC families.

Social-class differences are determined by a number of variables, the most significant of which appears to be occupational level, which, in turn, is influenced by the amount of education completed. Education is the major avenue for social mobility, but LC children can succeed in school only if they are able to accept the goals and the norms that are basic to school achievement. For its part, the school is an MC institution that has difficulty in adapting its procedures to the needs and problems of LC children. Even MC adults who attempt to create a permissive, free atmosphere in the school find that they cannot help slum children learn. MC children, who have built-in motives favorable to school, may benefit from highly permissive learning situations, but such methods are less likely to work with slum children whose behavior is not guilt-oriented and who seem unable to take the initiative in taking

up the tasks of learning the basic skills. LC children tend to have attitudes toward school that are passive or sometimes hostile and are inclined, realistically or not, to expect failure. On the positive side, many LC children are inspired by their teachers, succeed in school, and escape from the slum environment. For a large number of LC children, the school is also a safer and more secure haven than is their home environment. The life style of the typical LC home does not stimulate the development of an achievement to any great extent, and the LC child who does achieve may pay a price in terms of rejection by his family and the members of his peer group. Social mobility in any direction, upward or downward, generates stresses, with accompanying feelings of marginality and alienation.

Consistent with the general patterns of LC life is a tendency for authoritarian attitudes and behavior to prevail. In some LC cultures, such as that of the Mexican-American, there are compensating rewards in the form of emotional support from a closely knit family structure. This tends to give the individual a high degree of psychological security, but makes it difficult for him to develop the achieving patterns of behavior demanded by the host culture. The mutually reinforcing patterns of rejection and self-abasement that are experienced by LC people occur whenever they come in contact with a progress-oriented society dominated by MC values and organized along MC lines, as a survey of North African immigrants in Israel has shown.



*Editorial Photocolor  
Archives*

# Chapter 9

## Social Roles

### *Characteristics of social roles*

In Chapter 8 we described social systems in terms of interlocking positions, each conferring status on the occupant and each defined by appropriate roles. We then discussed differences in behavior among people who occupy positions at various status levels.

In this chapter we shall take up *social roles*: the patterns of action that indicate the position being occupied, as well as the status appropriate to it. Each position carries with it certain rights and obligations which set the norms specifying the kinds of behavior that are appropriate. We shall give considerable attention to sex roles, inasmuch as they have a major influence on personality.

Ralph Linton (1936) defines roles in terms



of actions that are performed by an individual to validate his occupancy of a position. Daniel R. Miller (1963) also points out that roles have a certain normative effect on social behavior. He states: "The mutual responses of two people can be explained more readily by their shared conceptions of the behavior appropriate to their two *roles* than by their psychological characteristics or the unique qualities of the social interaction" [p. 655]. In other words, although there are wide variations among the needs, motives, and personality patterns of customers and sales clerks, we can nevertheless predict with a high probability of success that a customer in a supermarket will bring his purchases to the checkout stand and that the clerk will ring up the price of each item on a register, place it in a bag, tell the customer the total shown on the register tape, and accept payment, whereupon the customer will pay the amount requested. The specifics of these two reciprocating roles are set by culture and prevailing custom, and are shared by both sales clerk and customer.

As Miller also notes, social roles function to set limits to the behavior of members of a society, but these limits make sense when one realizes that roles are essential to the existence of a social structure. Roles cannot be regarded by position holders as rules of a game that they can change at will. A social structure must of necessity specify limits to the behavior of persons who occupy positions within it, if it is to fulfill its functions and serve its members adequately. This does not mean that the roles and functions of any given unit of society are totally beneficial, but rather that the total set of structures within a given society is likely to aid the functioning of the society, rather than to interfere with it, otherwise the society would not survive.

Miller continues as follows:

The fact that structures are interlocked within the society makes constraints even

greater. Thus the modern family is responsible for the care, feeding, and socialization of immature children, no other structures in the society can completely take over these functions for intact families. Consequently, a woman who has young children and wants to work full time may face the antagonism of her husband and such simple obstacles as the unavailability of baby sitters, the lack of nurseries for children under three, and the part time schedule of most nurseries. Thus it is only by personal attention that a woman can fulfill her obligations to her children [p. 657].

As individuals interact in a social setting, they perform various functions for one another, some functions growing out of biological relationships to others, such as a mother toward her children, and others growing out of the demands of a situation, such as teachers toward their students. Actions involved in carrying out these functions become routinized. Such routines may make for efficiency in accomplishing goals, or may be dictated by the logic of the functional relationship, or by tradition. Individuals who subsequently occupy positions may also learn appropriate role behaviors through imitation, by responding to the expectations of others, or both.

The way in which roles determine behavior is governed by the position the individual occupies, as we have noted previously. However, positions may shift from minute to minute in terms of the situation that prevails. Mr. Bassett occupies the overlapping positions of husband to Mrs. Bassett and father to their children. The two positions also merge into one that might be termed 'head of the household'. When guests arrive, however, these positions are subordinated to his position as host. When one of the children is heard crying in another room, Mrs. Bassett, who is serving the coffee at that moment, will ask Mr. Bassett to investigate, thus changing the situation momentarily.

into one in which the positions of husband and father are more relevant. Mr. Bassett excuses himself, goes off to quiet the child, and then returns to resume his position as host. On the other hand, if Mr. Bassett is in the middle of an involved anecdote, he may refuse to have the situation restructured, preferring to continue in the position of host. His wife's request creates a conflict in roles for him, a topic we will take up later in the chapter.

### *Prescription of roles*

Roles that are attached to certain positions tend to be more or less standardized. The roles that are attached to the position of host and guest are highly prescriptive in the Middle East. In middle-class North America they are less so, but there are nevertheless certain standard forms of behavior expected of hosts even in this more permissive society. For example, it is customary to greet guests at the door in somewhat neater and more formal attire than one would wear if guests were not expected. The guests' coats and hats will be taken from them and they will be invited into the living room. They will be offered something to drink, and, if they happen to have come near mealtime, they will probably be asked to share the meal. If the guests are unexpected, and there is insufficient food, the host may suggest that they go out to eat. Interruptions and distractions are kept at a minimum. For example, if the host should be called to the telephone during the visit, he will try to make the conversation a short one, or will ask the caller to ring back later.

It is understood, of course, that there are many variations in the way these roles are played, and that some people may wittingly or unwittingly deviate from the prescribed patterns of behavior. A host may, for example, become engaged in a long telephone conversation while his wife attempts to keep a conversation going with the guests. Such behavior on

the part of the host is usually considered an affront to guests, although it is good form for guests not to show that they have been affronted.

What we have described, however, is the kind of behavior prescribed for hosts that is displayed by them *most* of the time. Other kinds of behavior may be consistent with the roles prescribed for a certain position, but may be followed only by a limited number of people. Some women in upper-class circles may, for example, follow a ritual of serving afternoon tea, British style, whenever guests are present. The tendency is usually to engage in behavior that is consistent with the role prescriptions for the position, and to avoid those that are not. An example of inconsistent behavior would be that of telling guests that they have stayed long enough and that it is time to leave.

Certain roles become so attached to certain positions that they can be recognized whenever they are played, even out of context. A senior secretary who acts in a protective way toward the much younger secretaries and typists in her department and who sympathetically listens to their problems is said to be playing a "mother role." An elementary teacher says that she does not like "yard duty," because she does not enjoy playing the role of a policeman. An instructor who is a clinical psychologist objects to giving grades in mental hygiene courses, because he does not like the role of "playing judge," particularly where mental health is concerned.

Ervin Goffman (1959) has discussed roles in terms of a "dramaturgic" model, in which roles become the medium of transaction between an actor (i.e., the individual) and his "audience." Role behavior is seen by Goffman as constituting a kind of performance, and the audience consists of not merely those who are gathered together for the purpose of listening and observing, but anyone, real or imagined, whose attention may be directed to the actor. Goffman describes a number of devices whereby

audiences help actors play their roles successfully—by tactfully overlooking a slip, for example, as in the case of the guests who pretend not to notice that their host is talking overlong on the telephone. Actors, for their part, stage their role performances in such a way as to elicit the proper type of appreciation from their audiences. Praise, admiration, and approval are obvious goals of role players, but many actors give performances that seem calculated to arouse anger, irritation, and other forms of disapproval.

### *Positions and roles*

The positions to which roles are attached can be classified into at least five different kinds or groupings of positions, according to Robert Linton (1945). These positions will be found in any society, no matter how simple or primitive it may be, and any given individual in a society will occupy all or most of these positions at various times as he interacts with others:

1. Age-sex groupings: specifically, infant, boy, girl, young man, young woman, old man, and old woman.
2. Family, kinship, clan, or household groupings, as indicated by some generic term: John Bassett, one of the Steen family, or the Grahams' maid.
3. Prestige or status groupings, such as president, ordinary seaman, customer, chairman, and slave.
4. Occupational groupings, such as workman, dentist, or salesman.
5. Friendship and common-interest groupings, such as friend, club member, chess player, and political party member.

A sixth category should be added to this list: *organizational groupings*, such as board member, receptionist, public-relations expert, and comptroller. Linton omitted this category; he was concerned with primitive societies and,

therefore, did not include the organizations that have become essential to the functioning of industrialized and urbanized modern societies.

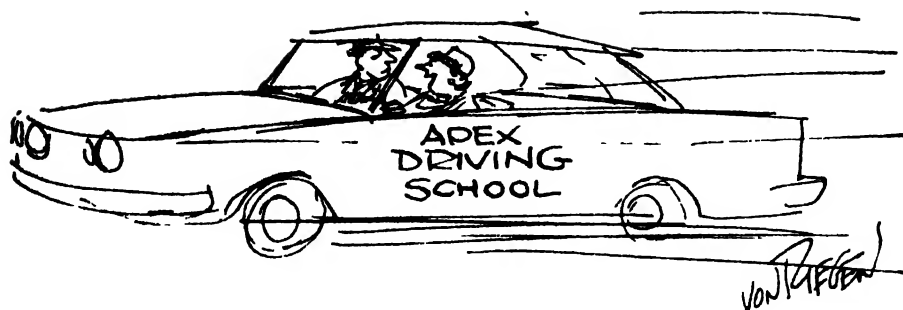
Aidan William Southall (1959) has categorized roles into five groups, using a system that resembles Linton's to a marked degree: kinship and ethnic, economic, political, religious and ritualistic, and recreational. Irrespective of whether one looks at the social system in terms of positions or roles, the classifications are quite similar.

Positions may be classified into two groups: ascribed and achieved. Ascribed positions are those over which an individual has no control; for example, sex and age. Achieved positions must be attained through some effort; for example, accountant and club member. In the North American culture, social class (a prestige or status grouping) may be both. One has no control over the social class into which he is born, but may change it through education or marriage.

### *Roles as learned expectations*

We have noted that the roles prescribed for various positions consist of standardized forms of behavior. We can also view them in terms of expectations. A person who is an accountant is expected to do whatever accountants do: keep financial records in an orderly and responsible way, be meticulous about figures, be prompt, diligent, and the like. The person who occupies the position of accountant, in turn, takes on society's expectations as his own. In effect, society's are "mirrored" in the expectations he develops for himself. The mirroring of expectations holds true for roles prescribed for other positions as well.

Roles are learned sequences of behavior—ways of translating values into patterns of action (Miller, 1963). As children, we learn first to behave the way our culture and our family



*"Suddenly I feel so anti-pedestrian!"*

*Role Expectations*  
(William von  
Riegen: © 1966  
Saturday Review,  
Inc.)

expect children to behave. This learning carries over into our experiences outside the home, where behavior is likely to be differentiated according to the family's social status.

Social learning is a major factor here, in the sense that we learn to imitate the behavior of parental and older sibling models, particularly with respect to the behavior that is appropriate to our sex. This learning is supplemented by reinforcement at appropriate points. As boys, we might be attracted somewhat to doll play, but quickly learn that "dolls are for girls." As girls, we learn to display the kind of behavior that evokes the response "Isn't she sweet?", with all its attendant fringe benefits. As boys, we learn that climbing trees and bicycling is "fun," and playing house is "no fun." As girls, we learn that dressing up in mother's castoff clothes is "fun," and getting dirty when playing ball is "no fun." The values, attitudes, percepts, and roles attached to our positions as boys or girls become a part of us. They identify and define us and tell us and others "who we are."

### ***Reciprocal roles***

As we become familiar with our own roles, we also become familiar with those of others. Roles are likely to be reciprocal. One cannot play the role of the mother without a child or

a substitute for a child. One cannot play the role of a teacher without reference to learner. Consciously or not, one of the first things we learn to do when we meet a stranger is to locate his position in some social structure, preferably our own. Once we do this, we know what his prescribed roles are and how they relate to the roles prescribed for our position. Then we know how to interact with him. Observe the reaction to a strange child who appears in a neighborhood play group. Immediately the questions start to fly: "What's your name? What does your father do? Where do you live? Where do you go to school?" These are only the first of a series of questions that will help the children define the position and probable role behaviors of the stranger and that will, in turn, enable them to determine how they should behave toward him.

A similar phenomenon occurs when a stranger, say, a tourist, appears in a remote Middle East village. Because he is not of the village or the area or even the country, he does not fit into the social structure. There is no position for him, no prescribed role, no way in which the villagers can interact with him. But he cannot be ignored. There he is, making noises in some strange foreign tongue, and obviously looking for something. A position must be found for him. The most obvious position is

that of guest. Once this is decided, and it is usually decided almost instantaneously, there is great relief. One may not know how to respond to a tourist, but one knows how to respond to a guest, and whatever ritual is involved in greeting and treating guests now goes into operation. Indeed, the villagers' sense of honor *compels* them to behave in a hostlike manner. The tourist may be mystified by the treatment he is receiving, but the villagers are no longer confused, for their culture tells them exactly how to behave toward a person occupying the position of guest.

## ***Sex Roles***

Social psychologists have conducted more research on behavior patterns related to sex differences than they have on other kinds of role-appropriate behavior.<sup>1</sup> Every society differentiates between the roles performed by the two

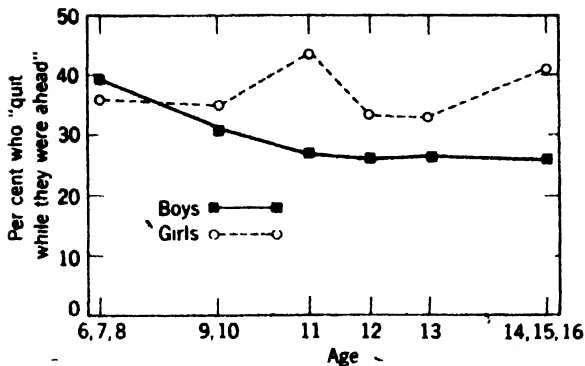
<sup>1</sup>One puzzling phenomenon in personality research is the tendency for personality tests to predict appropriate social behavior for men but not for women. Frank Barron (1953), for example, developed a personality questionnaire of attitudes characteristic of subjects who refused to yield to the false majority in the Asch (1956) situation. Male subjects' scores on the test correlated over .50 with tendencies to resist the false norm in the Crutchfield situation, but correlations between test scores and yielding (or nonyielding) were essentially zero for women (Tuddenham, 1959). Women's scores on the Barron test do not entirely lack validity, however, for they show the expected negative correlation with the F scale (Lindgren, 1962). Similar sex differences appear in a number of other areas, in which personality tests are used to predict social behavior, as for example, the research with various measures of the need to achieve (n Ach) (Wiener, Johnson, & Mehrabian, 1968), and with modes of decision-making in group settings (Hall & Williams, 1971). The reasons why women tend to say one thing on some personality questionnaires and do something else in social situations have not been adequately researched.

sexes. A relatively minor part of the behavior prescribed for each sex (e.g., the breast-feeding of infants) is due to obvious physical differences. Is the balance of the observed differences in behavior due, then, to less obvious biological factors—differences in hormonal balance, for example? Or do the differences result from social learning? Let us first look at the differences for clues to the relative importance of biology and of social learning.

## ***Risk-taking***

In most cultures, men are expected to be more adventurous than women. These tendencies appear in childhood and seem to be quite consistent. Paul Slovic (1966) set up a game at a county fair to test sex differences in risk-taking. The game consisted of a panel of ten electric switches, nine of which were connected to an apparatus that would dispense a small amount of candy, and one that would sound a buzzer. Players were permitted to keep whatever candy they won, as long as they did not pull the buzzer switch. Inasmuch as all the switches looked alike, and the position of the buzzer switch varied with each trial and was unknown to the players, there was a strong element of risk in the game. The more switches a player pulled successfully, the greater the probability that the next switch would activate the buzzer, whereupon he would lose everything he had won.

Figure 9-1 shows Slovic's results. Between the ages of six and ten, there is little difference between boys and girls with respect to risk-taking, but after that age girls tend to become more cautious and boys less so. There is little change in boys' risk-taking behavior from the age of eleven on. Although Slovic's game was open to all comers, more than twice as many boys as girls volunteered to participate (732 as against 312), which suggests that boys are also more interested than girls in engaging in new experiences and trying novel devices.



**Figure 9-1.** Percentages of children at various ages who stopped playing a game in order not to incur any further risk and lose all their winnings. (Slone, 1965. Copyright © by The Society for Research in Child Development, Inc.)

### *Antisocial motives*

Males are also inclined to be more aggressive. One study tested the hypothesis that male college students would show more aggressiveness than women on a questionnaire designed to measure tendencies to express aggression. The male subjects not only indicated a greater willingness to commit aggressive acts, but also expressed less guilt about their aggressiveness. An interesting sidelight was the finding that women who were high academic achievers showed a low degree of aggression and a considerable degree of guilt about aggression, whereas the high achievers among men expressed a high degree of aggressiveness and a low degree of guilt. The results thus suggested that the highest achievers in each sex were those whose behavior and feelings corresponded with the pattern that is conventionally expected for their sex (Wyer, Weatherly, & Terrell, 1965). The tendency for sex-appropriate behavior to be associated with academic achievement evidently appears during the first years of school. Nicholas J. Anastasiow

(1965) gave five- and six-year-old boys a choice of a variety of toys and found that those who selected toys appropriate to their sex role (soldier, fire engine, gun, blocks, or truck, in contrast to beads, doll, purse, dishes, or comb and brush) made higher scores in reading and were rated as more successful by their teachers.

Another study that demonstrates male preferences for aggressive behavior was conducted by Mary Moore (1966), who showed pairs of violent and nonviolent pictures to children, adolescents, and college students. While the subject was looking through an apparatus that enabled him to see one picture with one eye and the other picture with the other eye, two different pictures were presented simultaneously, a half-second at a time, for example, the silhouettes of a mailman and a man with a knife in his back. When asked what they had seen, male subjects of all ages, from elementary school children to students in the first year of college, were more likely to report scenes of violence, whereas female subjects were more likely to report nonviolent scenes.

As one might expect, a certain degree of selfishness is coupled with male tendencies to be aggressive. In one study, subjects were led to believe that they were working with partners on a task and were asked, when the task was over, to indicate what they thought their fair share of the reward should be. When they were told that their own performance was superior, the female subjects tended to take only half the reward, whereas male subjects took more than half (Leventhal & Lane, 1970).

### *Prosocial motives*

The findings we have cited tend to confirm everyday observation: males are more inclined to be selfish, adventurous, aggressive, and attracted to violence, and females are inclined to be more cautious, accepting, nurturant, and passive. It would follow from this that females

would have more interest and skill in behavior calculated to promote peace and mutual acceptance. It is important to note that such behavior can succeed only if one shows an interest in others. Indeed, it is difficult to determine which is cause and which is effect: are women more able to exercise skills consistent with peacemaking because they are more interested in people, or are they more interested in people because they want to develop peacemaking skills?

Women certainly seem to enjoy social interaction, perhaps for its own sake. Bernard Bass and George H. Duntzman (1963) studied the behavior of men and women assigned randomly to informal groups and found that men were more inclined to behave in task-oriented ways and women in interaction-oriented ways. In other words, men were more interested in using or helping the group to solve problems, whereas women were more interested in talking to and being with others.

The relationship between social interest and social behavior is shown by a number of studies. In one study, subjects were interviewed singly by a graduate student who gazed steadily at them while asking either personal or innocuous questions. Subjects looked at the interviewer more often during the innocuous questions, and women subjects returned the gaze more often than men subjects, irrespective of the kind of questions that were directed at them, and irrespective of the interviewer's sex. During an informal discussion session that took place after each interview, women still made more "eye contact" than men did (Exline, Gray, & Schuette, 1965). Another investigator found that couples in love spent more time looking at each other than other types of couples, and that women in both groups of couples made more eye contact than the men did (Rubin, 1970).

Eye contact is an important kind of social behavior because it signifies the willingness to

initiate and establish close personal relationships with another person. Unwillingness to meet another person's gaze may be due to any number of reasons, but it has the effect of maintaining a degree of social distance. Mutual eye contact is more common among social equals in most cultures. Among a number of Eastern Asiatic cultures, for example, children are expected to look down when addressing elders, for to do otherwise would be bold and presumptuous. In our culture, the degree and kind of eye contact among persons of unequal status depends on the kind of relationship that is being initiated. Higher-status persons seek to establish eye contact with lower-status persons at times when the former are exerting their power by giving orders, making recommendations, or censuring. The willingness of the lower-status person to reciprocate eye contact is generally taken as symbolic of an agreement to obey, conform, or accept the censure. Lower-status persons may seek eye contact with higher-status persons if they are asking a favor or are trying to influence opinions. If the higher-status person does not reciprocate, this is taken as a sign that he does not wish to hear, understand, or be persuaded, whereas a willingness to reciprocate eye contact is generally taken to mean that the lower-status person's plea is being attended to and may be granted. Mutual eye contact, therefore, is perceived as acceptance and as having some positive social value in most social situations. Social situations charged with emotion, such as arguments, also are characterized by more eye contact. In such instances, the intent seems to be that of facilitating communication by gaining the attention of the other. Eye contact also plays a significant role among infrahuman animals. In monkey groups, a low-status member cannot look directly at a high-status member without running the risk of attack (Delgado, 1963).

The greater willingness of women to look at others was found by Exline, Gray, and

Schuerte (1965) to be related to sex differences in attitudes toward people in general. On a questionnaire measure, female subjects were more likely than males to say that they wanted to be involved and to involve others in social interaction, and were more willing to give and receive affection.

It has been proposed that some of the differences in behavior between the sexes can be accounted for by the tendencies of women to be more people-oriented and men to be more thing-oriented. If this is so, one would expect that in a social situation, like a party, women would be more concerned with looking at others in the group and men would be more concerned with the details of the task at hand—namely eating or drinking. Specifically, women when drinking should gaze out into the room, and men should look at what they are drinking. The reader is invited to test this hypothesis for himself.

The smiling response is another and perhaps more obvious way of indicating positive feelings toward others. If women are more interested in initiating and maintaining pleasant social relations with others, one would expect that they would do more smiling than men. In a study reported by Howard M. Rosenfeld (1966), assistants of the experimenter were instructed to seek approval from a naive subject. Both men and women assistants used smiles to approximately the same extent—29% of the time. When the assistants were asked to *avoid* the approval of subjects, however, the percentage of smiles dropped to 18% for men, as contrasted with 25% for women. The implication is that women were less able to bring themselves to stop smiling. Another group of investigators obtained videotaped records of families engaged in discussing their problems. Films were viewed without sound in order to identify smiling on the part of the parents, and typescripts were analyzed in order to match the content of what was being said by the partici-

pants while they were smiling. Results showed that fathers smiled while expressing friendliness or approval, whereas there was a tendency for mothers to be expressing something disapproving or negative when they smiled. The investigators (two of whom were women) concluded that fathers' smiles appeared to be "more sincere" (Bugental, Love, & Gianetto, 1971).

Rosenfeld also found sex differences with respect to the use of head nods. When the seeking-acceptance condition prevailed in his experiment, men used positive nods 29% of the time, whereas women used them 20%. In the avoiding-acceptance condition, however, the percentage for positive nods dropped to 16% for men, but *increased* to 24% for women. The use of positive nods is particularly significant, because the naive subjects, when polled after the approval-avoidance experience (when they were still unaware of the purpose of the experiment), were more likely to express positive regard for the assistants who had used more positive nods. When the assistants were queried by the experimenters with respect to their reaction to the experiment, the women assistants were more likely to report that they had greater difficulty in behaving negatively or even neutrally toward the naive subject. As for the naive subjects, they expressed more positive regard for the women assistants than for the men assistants in the approval-avoidance situation. The results suggest that men reject others more willingly and more effectively, whereas women reject less willingly and less effectively, at least in situations where they have no self-initiated or spontaneous motive for expressing rejecting attitudes.

One would also expect that if women are more motivated toward social involvement than men, they would be more alert to various dimensions of social interaction in groups. Some research conducted by Ralph V. Exline (1957) on small groups of students bears this



out: women subjects were more accurate than men in perceiving interpersonal relations in their groups. In another study concerned with social memory, women proved to be better than men at remembering names and faces of people, irrespective of whether they encountered them as photographs or in real-life situations (Witryol & Kaess, 1957).

To summarize the sex differences we have covered in this array of research findings, it appears that males tend to be more adventurous, aggressive, interested in violence, and task-oriented, whereas females tend to be more cautious, accepting, passive, interested in initiating and maintaining social contacts, unwilling to behave negatively or neutrally toward others, and inclined to evoke positive responses from others.

### *Instinct*

None of these findings are very surprising, since they more or less confirm everyday observation. Not only are we aware that men are more aggressive, active, competitive, and that women are more passive, socially oriented, and accepting, but we also believe that they were "born that way." This is consistent with common sense and the conventional wisdom. In other words, common sense and the conventional wisdom would hold that behavioral differences between the sexes are due entirely to biologically inherited tendencies, or to put it more succinctly, to *instinct*.

Psychologists, and especially social psychologists, are inclined to be extremely suspicious of explanations based on instinct. We already touched on this in Chapter 2, when we pointed out that instinct theory does not explain enough. Evidence contrary to the instinct explanation of sex differences may also be drawn from everyday observation. For example, it is common to encounter men who are compliant and nurturant and not aggressive

and women who are aggressive and domineering. Such behavior is, of course, counternorm, but there are enough cases to give us pause before accepting an instinct explanation for the usual sex differences in behavior.

The case for instinct could be made somewhat stronger if it could be shown that behavior identified with one sex or the other in our culture was similarly identified in other cultures as well. Values and norms are known to differ widely from culture to culture. If certain sex-oriented consistencies were found in spite of such variation, such a finding would provide some degree of support for instinct theories.

If men are biologically predetermined to be more dominant and aggressive than women, we would expect them to take more positions of leadership in various organizations both in the United States and elsewhere. At least one study shows that this does indeed occur. When samples of adults living in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, and Mexico were asked whether they had ever been officers of the organizations they belonged to, men were more likely than women to say "yes." As Figure 9-2 shows, there were marked differences among the five countries, but in every instance but one, men were more likely to have held positions of leadership (Almond & Verba, 1963). The only exception is the United States, but even here the overall number of men who were leaders was higher because more men were organization members. Thus the evidence does suggest that tendencies of men to lead transcend cultural boundaries and therefore may be to some extent biologically determined.

### *Culture*

The thesis that sex differences in behavior are largely culturally determined appears in an anthropological study conducted by Margaret Mead (1935), who studied three primitive New Guinea tribes: the Arapesh, the Tchambuli, and

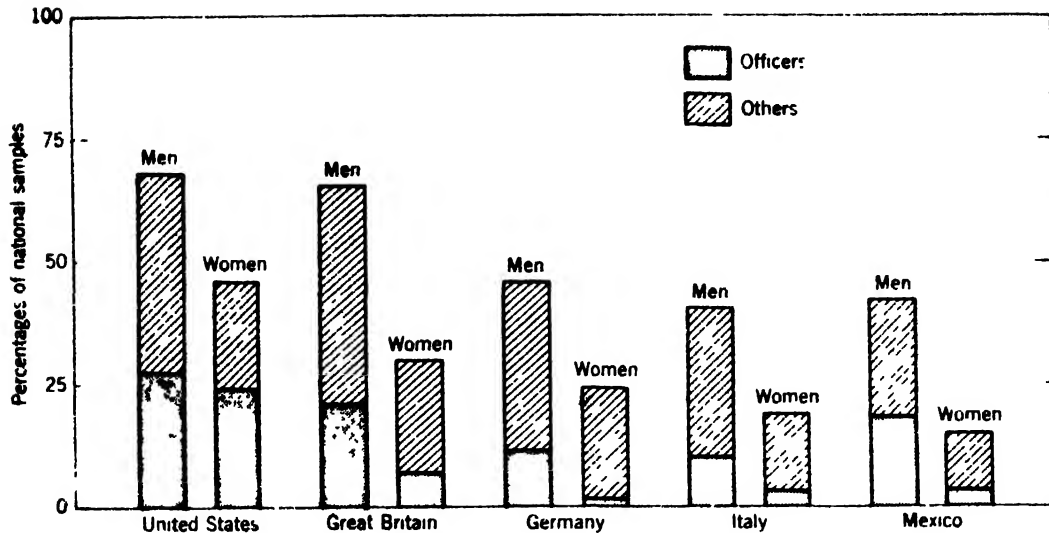


Figure 9-2. Percentages of men and women in five countries who said they were regular members or officers of voluntary associations (Almond & Verba, 1963)

the Mundugumor. She found that both men and women in the Arapesh culture behave in ways that are responsive to the needs and concerns of others and avoid aggressiveness and competition. The Arapesh of both sexes conform, in short, to behavior patterns that would be considered "feminine" in Western cultures. The behavior of men and women alike in the cannibalistic Mundugumor society is characterized by hostility, aggressiveness, violence, and lack of consideration for the rights and feelings of others—qualities we would consider "masculine." It was in the Tchambuli culture, however, that Mead found a real reversal. Tchambuli men are sensitive, carefully groomed, artistic, emotionally volatile, and given to bickering, whereas women are stable, practical, dominant, and aggressive in matters of sex. Mead's data strongly suggest that instinct is an insufficient basis for explaining sex differences in behavior, and that what we recognize as sex-appropriate behavior is the result of social learning, rather than of biological inheritance.

Further data in support of Mead's thesis are supplied by Ethel M. Albert (1963), an anthropologist who has studied social behavior in Central African tribes. Although Western societies assume that men, rather than women, are by nature, of their skeletal and muscular build suited for heavy labor, most Africans believe the opposite. When Albert told some African women that men did the heavy work in her country, they expressed disapproval. Americans, they said, were making a mistake, because everyone knows that men drink too much and do not eat enough to keep up their strength. They are too tense and too inclined to wander about to develop the kinds of muscles and habits that are necessary for sustained agricultural labor. Men, they said, are not suited by nature for this kind of work.

Albert also noted other anthropological research data that indicate a lack of uniformity among different cultures with respect to what could be considered sex-appropriate behavior. Whereas Western societies expect men to be sexually aggressive and women to play passive

or evasive roles, some African and American Indian societies, she reports, maintain that women are more driven by sex than men are. Among Zuñi Indians, it is the groom, not the bride, who looks forward to the wedding night with fear and apprehension. It is probably no coincidence that decisions in the Zuñi society are made by women.

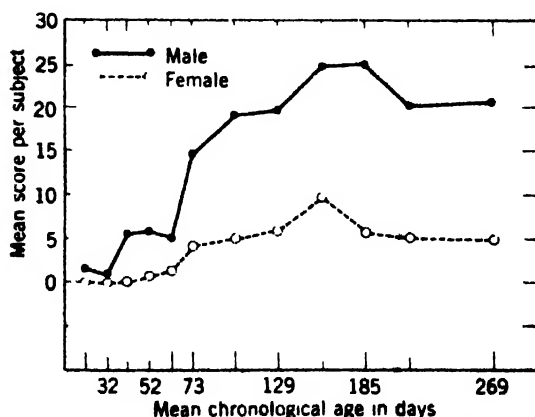
Edward T. Hall (1959) notes that emotional and intellectual sex roles in Iran are approximately the reverse of what they would be in Western cultures. Men are not expected to conform to the strong, silent norm of the Western male, but are expected to show their emotions and even have tantrums. If they do not, other Iranians are likely to think that they lack vital human traits and are probably not dependable. Iranian men enjoy poetry and are supposed to be sensitive, intuitive, and not very logical. In Iran, it is the women who are supposed to be logical and practical.

In the light of reports like these, the belief that certain kinds of social behavior are biologically predetermined for men and others for women should be questioned and reexamined. The evidence as presented so far is, however, incomplete and may, in fact, be one-sided.

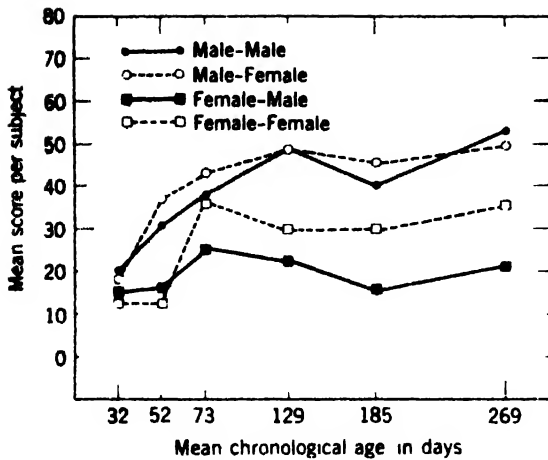
One dimension of behavior that has been overlooked in such reports is that of each sex's role in warfare. If sex differences in behavior are entirely learned, one would expect that women would carry the brunt of the fighting in some cultures, yet a survey of warfare practices shows that fighting is almost entirely a masculine activity. In some cultures, as for example, Russia and Israel, women are part of the fighting forces, but their role is essentially an auxiliary one. Even in the Tchambuli tribes the fighting is done by men. They are reluctant fighters, to be sure, but the point is that it is they who do it and not the women. The peaceful Arapesh also go to war, and the men do the fighting.

### *Biological determinants*

There is much research on aggressiveness among infrahuman animals. In brief, the findings show that aggressiveness tends to be a typically male characteristic. Among the primates, there is a great deal of variation in hostility and aggression, but males of any given species are more aggressive than females (Scott, 1958). Injection of male hormones also has the effect of increasing aggressiveness and dominance in animals that had previously not displayed such behavior (Clark & Birch, 1945, 1946, Guhl, 1949). Harry F. Harlow (1962) has presented some rather compelling evidence to support the instinctive position. Figure 9-3 shows the relative frequency with which male and female macaque monkeys observed by Harlow exhibited "threat responses" during the first year of life. Although female monkeys show some increase in aggressiveness during the period of development, there is no question that male monkeys are inclined to be far more hostile. Indeed, male monkeys show higher rates of both hostile and friendly aggressiveness. Figure 9-4 shows the frequency with



*Figure 9-3. Frequency of threat responses by male and female monkeys during the first year of life. (Harlow, 1962. Copyright © 1962 by the American Psychological Association.)*

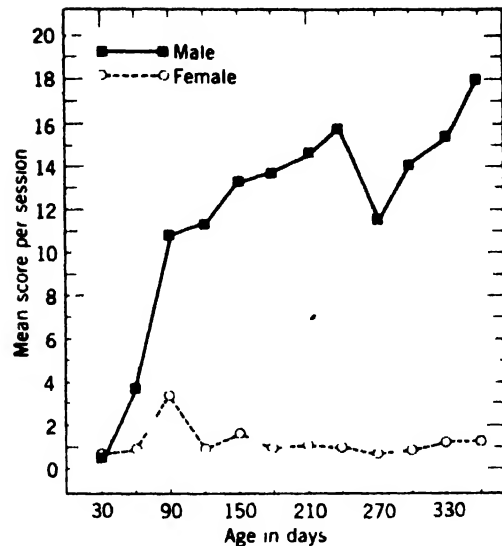


**Figure 9-4.** Frequency of "rough-and-tumble" play for two male and two female monkeys during the first year of life (Harlow, 1962 Copyright © 1962 by the American Psychological Association)

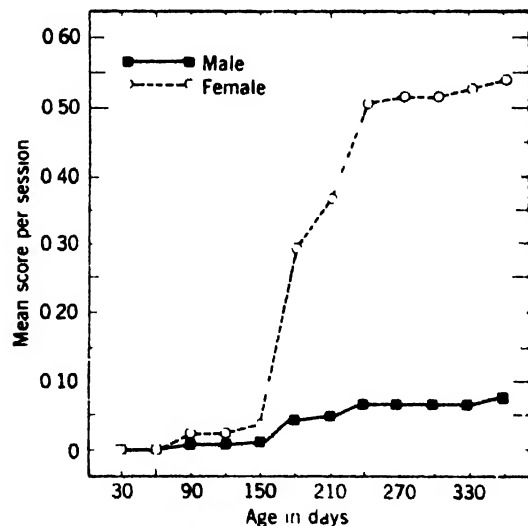
which young monkeys initiated contact and interacted with one another in play situations. As the top graph lines show, male monkeys took the initiative in play more frequently. The two bottom lines show that female monkeys took considerably less initiative in play and also initiated it less often with male monkeys. Harlow's statistics on rough-and-tumble play are also impressive. Figure 9-5 shows that such aggressive and vigorous play is almost entirely a male pattern of behavior. If Harlow's female monkeys were learning anything, they were not learning how to rough-house. Figure 9-6 shows that they were, in fact, learning grooming. Caressing and stroking are not only feminine prerogatives in most human societies, but characteristic of female macaque monkeys as well.

### *Interaction between social learning and biology*

At this point, the evidence relating to instinctual and social-learning explanations of sex role behavior must seem contradictory and confus-



**Figure 9-5** Frequency with which male and female monkeys initiated play with members of their own and opposite sex (Harlow 1962 Copyright © 1962 by the American Psychological Association)



**Figure 9-6** Frequency of grooming behavior made by male and female monkeys during the first year of life (Harlow 1962 Copyright © 1962 by the American Psychological Association)

ing, and there may indeed be no clear answer as to what *really* is masculine and feminine or what the origin of what we recognize as masculine and feminine is likely to be. There may be a reasonable explanation, however, located somewhere between the two positions.

It does seem that aggressive, adventurous, and active behavior may be biologically predetermined for males, and that sympathetic, accepting, and passive behavior may likewise be biologically determined for females. The fact that these two contrasting patterns of behavior are consistent for the respective sexes among infrahuman animals suggests very strongly that similar biological forces operate for humans. Although there are wide variations from culture to culture in patterns of what is considered masculine or feminine, the sex-typed trends described do seem to be the ones most often encountered.

The differences between cultures may be accounted for by the fact that man is in many respects more flexible than the infrahuman animals. He learns more quickly, learns a greater variety of patterns, and is able to learn patterns of behavior that may drastically modify and even supplant some of the more biologically determined responses. As long as a form of behavior is physically possible, it can be learned by man. Men can learn to be motherly, and women can learn to be aggressive and competitive; men can learn to be graceful and socially sensitive, and women can learn to be blunt and insensitive; and so forth. The capacity of humans to learn and perpetuate patterns of learning can account for the variants observed by Mead, Albert, and Hall, noted earlier. The behavior of man thus appears to be *both* biologically *and* socially determined. This should give some reassurance to the champions for women's rights, who have been pointing out that inasmuch as work in an industrialized, urbanized, highly complex culture is less physically demanding than work in more primitive

surroundings, there is less and less need for men to play dominant roles and greater opportunity for genuine equality between the sexes. The only remaining problems to be solved in achieving sexual equality seem to be to eliminate war (and the need for aggressive, "masculine" behavior) and to get more women to develop an interest in complex, quantitative problems of the type posed by today's technological society.

### *Status-granting by women*

For the present, however, most cultures, Western included, appear to be masculine-dominated, with women playing secondary, supportive roles. This arrangement appears to be acceptable to most women, as shown by the fact that women who through stock ownership possess the controlling interest in many of the industrial and financial organizations in the nation have not rallied around the Women's Liberation standard in order to persuade the companies they control to change their policies regarding the hiring or promotion of women executives.

Further evidence for the acceptance by women of the status quo is shown by their willingness to grant more status to men. In a masculine-dominated culture, it would be expected that men would generally be more socially attractive than women. When girls say that attending college enables them to "meet interesting people," they are referring to men, not women. Indeed, women are much more likely than men are to say they are attending college in order to find a marriage partner (Binger, 1961). Even their dreams are revealing: women are more likely to dream about men than men are to dream about women (Hall & Dumhoff, 1963).

In mixed-sex groups, conventional sex role requirements tend to take precedence over the individual's usual tendencies. Edwin I. Me-

gargee (1969) found that in same-sex dyads (two-person groups), men or women scoring high on the Dominance scale of the California Psychological Inventory tended to take over the leadership from same-sex partners scoring low on the same scale, when they were given tasks in which one member had to take charge and the other had to play a subordinate role. When men scoring low on the Dominance scale were paired with women scoring high, however, women yielded the leader's role almost 80% of the time. This is the reverse of what occurred when high- and low-Dominant women were paired. On such occasions, the high-Dominant women took charge over 70% of the time. In other words, in mixed-sex situations, high-Dominant women abandoned their usual approach and turned over the leadership to the men, and the low-Dominant men gave up *their* usual status and took charge.

In another study, college women subjects were shown paintings and asked to evaluate them. Half the subjects were told that the artist was male; the other half that the artist was a woman. Half the subjects thought the paintings were entries in a contest; and half thought the paintings were prize-winners. The presumed sex of the artist had no bearing on the subjects' judgments in judging paintings represented as prize-winners, but when the paintings were represented as show entries, the subjects rated them higher if they thought the artists were men. The investigators concluded that women who are attempting to accomplish something are judged more severely by other women than men are.

The impact of the masculine interest in our culture appears quite early in life. Two-year-old boys and girls, in one experiment, expressed preferences for their father, rather than their mother, as a playmate in seven different play situations (Lynn & Cross, 1970). In another survey, a majority of primary-grade girls indicated greater preference for masculine than

for feminine things (Brown, 1962), and a Gallup poll in 1970 showed that four times as many American women as men confessed to wishing they were the opposite sex, in spite of a strong tendency for them to feel that women had it easier than men.

There is some evidence, however, that the disparity in status and prestige between the sexes has been diminishing, especially in the United States. The data reported in Figure 9-3 show that the norms governing sex roles are much more traditional in Great Britain, Germany, and Italy. For one thing, about twice as many men as women were members of voluntary organizations in those countries, as contrasted with about five women for every six men in the United States. Furthermore, only about 20% of the women belonging to such organizations actually became officers in Great Britain, Italy, and Mexico, 9% in Germany. This contrasts with 52% for women in the United States, which is actually higher than the corresponding percentage for men. To state this in other terms, not only are American women twice as likely to join organizations as in the four other countries, but they are three times as likely to become officers.

As we noted in Chapter 8, there are great differences in the United States in the status of women at the various social levels. Members of the lower class (LC) and the working class (WC) are more likely to function along traditional lines, with the men dominant and freer of responsibility and the women more likely to be tied to home and children. In middle-class (MC) homes, women achieve a much higher degree of equality, sharing in decisions regarding family policies, particularly in decisions that affect the spending of money. It is the LC man who is most likely to object to his wife's taking a job outside the home. Even when the money is sorely needed, as it usually is in LC homes, he is inclined to view a working wife as a threat to his status, as a public admission that he is

incapable of supporting his family. A woman who works and earns money is a freer person than one who does not, because her contributions to the family income give her the implied right to share in decisions about how it should be budgeted. Furthermore, the fact that she has a job shows that she is able to support herself if the marriage should be dissolved.

Women's status is higher in the upper class (UC) than in the MC. Since UC women are likely to outlive their husbands, they are also likely to control large fortunes. They also plan, direct, and manage the social affairs that determine who is associated with whom. Although MC women are quite active in community affairs, UC women are even more active and often play a leading part in politics at all levels—local, state, and federal.

As was previously stated, the North American core culture is essentially MC. The LC and WC members are continually reminded of MC values at every turn—through the mass media, the schools, contacts with governmental agencies, and the like. There is a tendency, therefore, for norms regarding the status and treatment of women to have some impact on LC and WC behavior. To use a social-learning approach to this phenomenon, the institutions in our society, being MC in character, reinforce MC patterns of behavior wherever they occur, with the result that the behavior of members of the other classes tends to drift in an MC direction. This process is also facilitated and expedited by the fact that sizable numbers of LC and WC young people become MC each year, usually by taking advantage of educational opportunities.

### *Changing relationships between the sexes*

There have been few comparative studies of shifts in women's status over the years, hence, it is difficult to find hard data that demonstrate this change. There is some evidence that

American values are moving in a more "feminine" than "masculine" direction. The sharp decline in the number of lynchings and the number of persons executed for crimes since the beginning of the century are one indication of the feminine drift in American values. Peace movements have become stronger and more vocal, and patterns of collective behavior characterized by aggressiveness and hostility receive less public support with each decade. Note also the changes in police methods and treatment of prison inmates within the last generation or so.

An interesting anomaly is that this feminine drift in *public* values has been accompanied by a masculine trend in *private* values, as indicated by an increase in violent crime, such as murder, rape, and armed robbery. Common sense would dictate that increases in crime are due to increased permissiveness on the part of society, but it makes equally good sense to say that our increased permissiveness toward our own antisocial tendencies has led us to be more tolerant of the crimes of others.

Attitudes of children and adolescents regarding members of the opposite sex are also changing. There is more tolerance for female patterns of behavior and dress on the part of males, as well as for male patterns of behavior and dress on the part of females. A considerable degree of antipathy and even some aggressiveness between boy and girl subcultures has been traditional, particularly during the preadolescent period of development. Girls took pleasure in besting boys academically and gaining favor with teachers and parents, while boys found ways to tease girls and make fun of them. Traditionally, there were very few real friendships between boys and girls during this period. They had little in common (or thought they did), and boys caught playing or even walking with girls were subjected to much harassment by other boys. This hostility died out during middle and late adolescence, when boys found

out that girls were interesting people to be with, on occasion. Middle-aged people have during the last few years been heard to comment that norms have changed considerably since they were in school, in that adolescents are dating earlier, "going steady" more frequently, and that there does not seem to be the intersex hostility that was characteristic of the preadolescent boy-girl relations.

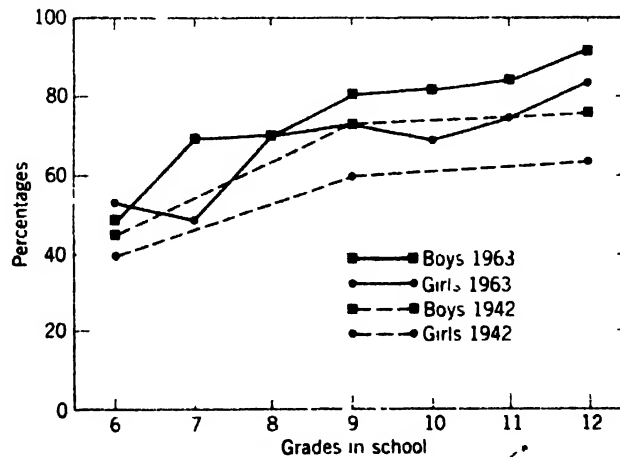
A comparative study conducted by Raymond G. Kuhlen and Nancy B. Houlihan (1965) suggests that norms had started to change over ten years ago. Their study included data gathered in 1942, when one hundred students of each sex in grades 6, 9, and 12 were asked to indicate the names of fellow students they would like to have sit next to them in class or as companions for such activities as attending the movies, going skating, and studying. The same questions were asked of students in the same schools in 1963. As the data in Figure 9-7 show, students in 1963 were more willing to have members of the opposite sex as companions. The barriers that limit or inhibit interaction

between the sexes had evidently been lowered or weakened during the intervening years.

## Conflicts in Roles

### Conflicts for men

One problem that occurs with increasing frequency because of shifts in norms in sex-related behavior is that of role conflict. As men's values become less clearly masculine, in the traditional sense, and women's values correspondingly less feminine, the inevitable result is an increase in ambiguity. Role prescriptions in Mediterranean and Latin American cultures, for example, which tend to be more traditional in their orientation, are quite clear for each of the sexes. In Spanish-speaking areas the difference may even be accentuated by *machismo*, a set of values and attitudes that lead men to project an ultra-masculine image through behavior characterized by arrogance, lack of self-control, the sexual exploitation of women, and an enjoyment of



**Figure 9-7.** Percentages of boys and girls at various school grades in 1942 and 1963 who chose companions of the opposite sex for various activities (Kuhlen & Houlihan, 1965).



violence. The general endorsement of this posture on the part of Latin American men has made it difficult for other acceptable masculine patterns to make their appearance. In more industrialized and urbanized societies, as in North America, men may display traditional forms of masculine behavior such as aggressiveness, adventurousness, and risk taking, or they may display behavior that is considered feminine in traditional cultures and act in gentle, kind, understanding, and sympathetic ways. North American men may even play mothering roles, such as diapering, feeding, and comforting infants, without feeling that they are engaging in behavior that is inappropriate to their sex. There has even been some change in Mediterranean cultures. In Chapter 8 we reported a study by Prothro (1966), comparing Greek middle-class, working-class, and peasant norms in rearing young children. As the data reported in Table 8.1 showed, Greek middle-class fathers have become more involved in the tasks of child care and are beginning to share decision making with their wives.

The fact that there are several somewhat contradictory roles available for men in urbanized cultures does make for role conflict, particularly at times when choices must be made between roles—whether to spend a Saturday at the office catching up on work, out playing golf with the gang, or with the family on a picnic at the beach. The more sharply defined sex-appropriate roles are, the less the role conflict.

### *Conflicts for women*

However difficult problems of role conflict are for men in our culture, they are even more difficult for women, particularly for those who attend college. Carl Binger (1961), a psychiatrist attached to Radcliffe College, noted that our educational system confronts college women

with a choice between marriage, a career, or some combination of both. No matter how they resolve this choice, they are likely to feel guilty or somewhat less than fulfilled. The woman who drops out of college to marry is made to feel guilty by family, friends, and teachers, because 'she could have made something of herself'. The woman who continues college and goes on to graduate study and a career feels she has missed out on something because she did not marry. The woman who attempts to combine marriage with a career continually has the feeling that she is shortchanging either her marriage or her work and consequently is always in the position of feeling she is letting someone down. Men are much less likely to have such problems, because marriage and career are generally not perceived as different choices, or as especially incompatible with each other.

Binger observed that women often feel under considerable stress as a result of conflicting role prescriptions. If a college woman devotes her time and energy to study, she has fewer recreational contacts with men, and consequently is less likely to encounter a potential marriage partner. If she becomes socially active, her studies are likely to suffer, thus impairing her chance to prepare for a worthwhile career. The common reactions to this stress, according to Binger, are depression, exhaustion, and respiratory ailments.

Role conflict will occur in any situation in which two or more sets of expectations operate, and the usual result is some degree of tension and anxiety. In the situation we have just described, college women feel the need to follow the traditional injunction of displaying behavior that is traditionally feminine and thus attracting a potential mate, but at the same time parents, teachers, and friends expect them to go on and complete college in preparation for a career. The symptoms mentioned by Binger

are side effects of attempting to deal with the anxiety and tension resulting from the students' trying to determine "who they are."

### *Role conflict in organizations*

Ambiguities in behavioral expectations for members of each sex are by no means the only source of role conflict in modern society. The stresses and strains of organizational life are also likely to create situations leading to conflicts in roles. This problem has been examined by Robert L. Kahn and others (1964), who studied the effects of role ambiguity and role conflict in industrial settings. Kahn and his associates conceived of roles in organizations as occurring in interlocking, interrelated networks, or "role sets." Individuals who perform certain roles respond to expectations of others involved in their role set, as well as to their own expectations. Role conflict is created when there is a difference between what others expect of one and what one expects of oneself. The presence of role conflict is revealed in low levels of satisfaction with the job, lack of confidence in the organization, decreased self-confidence, a sense of futility, and other work-related emotional problems.

The school superintendent's role was the subject of a study by Gross, Mason, and McEachern (1958). Individuals in this position find role conflict inevitable, inasmuch as they must cope with the contradictory expectations of teachers, parents, the governing board of the school, politicians, and the public at large, as well as the expectations they have for themselves. With so many demands to satisfy, no one is likely to be satisfied, and superintendents have learned to cope with role conflict by four major devices: yielding to pressure, sticking to professional standards, making compromises, or avoiding the responsibility of making relevant decisions.

### *Role conflict for the "hasher"*

An instance of role conflict within an organizational context that has been examined in some detail is that of the "hasher" in college sororities. At least two levels of role conflict are involved here. First, many of the tasks of a hasher—setting tables, washing and drying dishes, and mopping floors—are perceived by these male students as more feminine than masculine. Although adults of both sexes wait on tables in restaurants, serving food to large numbers of young women somehow seems more consistent with feminine than with masculine roles, as far as young men are concerned. Second, the work of the hasher is at best semi-skilled and hence suitable for working-class people rather than for young men whose very involvement in the processes of higher education makes them *ipso facto* middle class. The hasher also occupies a position at the very lowest level in the sorority, below that of house mother and the cooks. In addition, a hasher is expected to be neat, polite, and efficient; he is not allowed to address the girls while serving them (unless asked a question); and he is not allowed to date any of the girls during his off-duty hours. The position of hasher, in other words, carries with it expectations and implications of menial or "dirty" work, low prestige, and manifest subservience to and strict social distance from a group of college women (Zurcher, Sonenschein, & Metzner, 1966).

In one sense, there is no real conflict in role here. Hashers are not required or expected to display the role behavior of college students when they are waiting on tables or cleaning up kitchens. Nor are they expected to behave like hashers in the classroom. The chief problem occurs, as it does with the college women just discussed, when the individual is required to play roles incompatible with his self-concept. The problem of the women described by Bin-

ger is more acute: they are troubled with shifting self-concepts and have difficulty in deciding which "self" is more appropriate. As far as the hashers are concerned, their main role, and the one most consistent with their self-concept, is that of the college student, and it is only the need for funds that forces them to accept work as hashers. The role conflict, therefore, occurs in their having to behave as hashers according to expectations (role prescriptions) that are incompatible with the expectations emanating from their main role as college students.

The chief reaction to conflict of the hashers in the study just cited was one of resentment and hostility. Among their own group in the kitchen, they referred to the girls as "cows" or "pigs." They played practical jokes on them, such as dropping a marble or two into a gelatin grape salad mold. They appeared to get much satisfaction out of "getting the girls' goats" by spilling food, ignoring orders, answering criticism sharply, and the like. Another outlet for tension and hostility was horseplay in the kitchen: food throwing or water splashing, "in-group" jokes, and general zaniness. For example, the hashers created "bits," which were sequences of role-playing behavior, structured along certain lines. During the bit, everything in the work setting—hashers, cooks, sorority members, utensils, food—would be made a part of the dramatic scene, and hashers would adopt the appropriate terminology. For instance, the bit in one working session used the pretense that the kitchen and dining room were a "hell ship," with the hashers cast in the role of mutineers, the girls as "powdered pirates," and the cooks as "Ahab" and "Bligh." Knives became harpoons, meat became "salt horse," going into the dining room was "walking the plank," and a bosomy sorority girl was nicknamed "the treasure chest." In another bit, the kitchen became the Third Reich, and the girls "Storm Troopers," while "bravery under fire" was rewarded by decoration with lettuce-leaf

medals. Such dramatic bits served a useful purpose as a kind of psychodrama that enabled hashers to work off tensions and hostility and thus establish better control of role-conflict problems.

### *Compartmentalization*

People usually deal with role conflicts of the type we have discussed by using a psychological defense mechanism termed "compartmentalization," whereby one actually becomes a different kind of person, at least on a superficial level, when engaging in the behavior that is most alien to the self-concept. Compartmentalization calls for a great deal of control, self-denial, and flexibility. Adults in a complex, industrialized, and urbanized society attempt to deal with this problem by arranging their lives so that role conflict is kept at a minimum and by taking on positions that are more consistent with their self-concept. Since each position always has a set of appropriate values and attitudes, a shift from one position to another requires that one take on the appropriate attitudes and values, along with the roles, and there is always the possibility that values learned in an unwanted position may develop a sort of permanent anchorage. The presence of incompatible values within a self-system leads to further tension and anxiety, and further attempts at compartmentalization.

Role conflict is also a common occurrence in formerly primitive societies now undergoing rapid change. Finding stable positions in such societies is not easy. In many instances, the individual finds himself disowned by traditional society but without a place in the new one. Even in such societies, however, social learning can take place at a rapid rate. In some of the new African nations, it is possible to find persons who function as traditional juju men (medicine men) and also as respectable civil servants or even Sunday school teachers, without

having any doubts or qualms about mutually incompatible aspects of their positions and roles. Others do not fare so well and break into raving fits when the tension becomes unbearable, whereupon they are likely to regress to more primitive patterns of behavior (C. Colloby Zemleni, & Storper, 1965).

### *Role differentiation*

The persons who adjust more readily to the stresses of a changing society are likely to do so through role differentiation—that is, through developing and responding to a more extensive repertoire of roles. As Theodore R. Sarbin and Vernon L. Allen (1968) put it, "the more roles in an actor's repertoire, the better prepared he is to meet the exigencies of social life" (p. 491). The jujumen, the functionaries as civil servants and Sunday school teachers are examples of individuals whose ability to cope has been strengthened by their having learned a variety of roles.

The individual who has a more extensive range of roles at his command is not only able to interact effectively with individuals in a greater number of social positions, but is better able to empathize with them as well. Empathy is, essentially, the ability to take on in imagination the role of another and perceive a situation the way he sees it. Such a process implies not only a high degree of social sophistication on the part of the empathic individual, but a heightened ability to communicate as well, inasmuch as successful interchange among individuals depends in large degree on the extent to which participants are aware of one another's needs, feelings, attitudes, values, and the like.

Walter G. Stephan and Cookie Stephan (1971) investigated the relationship between role differentiation and empathy through interviewing lower-class residents and recent migrants in Santiago, Chile. Subjects were asked

to react to a series of pictures of the TAT type, each of which contained from four to seven people of all ages at scenes engaged in social activity. Role differentiation was measured by the number of roles respondents mentioned in telling stories about the pictures. Empathy was measured by another set of pictures in which respondents were asked to tell what he would do if he were one of the characters depicted and why he would do it.

Results showed that role differentiation and empathy were positively correlated ( $r = .43$ ) to a significant degree. Role differentiation and, to a lesser extent, empathy were also positively correlated with the number of years of education of the respondents, suggesting that education tends to facilitate social adjustment. Another indication of how well respondents were adjusting to the stresses of life was the number of neurotic symptoms (fear, sleep problems, cold sweats, high blood pressure, headaches, and pains) they reported. This measure of psychological adjustment was negatively correlated with role differentiation, empathy, and years of education. The investigators interpreted their findings as suggesting that empathy facilitates adaptation to the stresses of an urban environment, especially for migrants, by aiding the individual in learning new roles and in understanding the roles played by others. In rural settings, social roles are ascribed to others in the community, and the individual has to take little initiative in carrying them out, whereas in urban settings, where people are more likely to be strangers to one another, the individual must take some initiative in learning and *acting* his roles. This places more stress on the individual, particularly on the migrant, and probably accounts in part for the higher degree of neurosis the Stephanis found among them.

Incidentally, although the urban environment placed greater stress on the migrants than on the residents, only one of the sample of

thirty migrants wanted to return to rural life, the rest preferring to live in the city.

### *Summary*

Each position at various status levels in a social system carries with it certain rights and obligations, which set the norms specifying the kind of behavior appropriate to the satisfaction of said rights and obligations. Individuals learn to perform certain roles in order to validate their right to occupy the positions they hold. The roles specified and prescribed by a society limit the behavior of its members in ways that are, in a broad and general way, supportive to the society and aid its functioning. Some roles become so identified with certain positions that they can be recognized whenever they appear, even out of their appropriate context. Police, judgmental, and parental roles are examples.

Positions in all societies fall into at least five types of groupings: age-sex, family-household, status, occupation, and friendship-common interest. Technologically advanced societies also include a sixth grouping, organizations. Positions in these groupings may be designated as ascribed or achieved. An individual has no control over positions that are ascribed to him, but must expend some effort to achieve other positions.

The person who occupies a position is expected to behave in certain ways, and he tends to hold these expectations for himself and his own behavior. These expectations are acquired through processes of social learning and are reflected in the roles he plays. Roles are ways of translating values into patterns of action, according to Miller (1963). We learn to recognize positions that are in reciprocal relationship to each other and to play the appropriate roles. Once we know the positions

occupied by others, we have an idea of what to expect of them in the way of behavior and how we should behave toward them.

A major source of the difference in the behavior of the two sexes can be found in the expectations that society has for the members of each sex and that they come to have for themselves. Researchers have expressed considerable interest in determining whether these sex-appropriate expectations and the resulting roles are acquired through biological inheritance or through learning. Research shows that males are more likely to become involved in behavior characterized by risk, aggressiveness, and task orientation, whereas females are more likely to prefer activities involving social interaction and ingratiation. Although these differences tend to occur in most cultures, they are not universal. Anthropologists have found a number of societies, most of them primitive, in which roles that Western culture considers "masculine" are played by women, and "feminine" roles are played by men. Studies of monkey colonies show that aggressive types of behavior are typically masculine, whereas the more passive types are feminine. These data suggest that aggressiveness in males and passiveness in females may be biologically determined for the human species, as well as for infrahuman animals. However, anthropological data also suggests that biologically determined trends in behavior can be channeled and redirected through social learning.

Most cultures, Western included, appear to be masculine-dominated, with women playing secondary, supportive roles. There have been changes, however. The status of women appears to be moving in the direction of greater equality, particularly at the upper- and middle-class levels. Many of society's values, especially as they relate to the punishment of social deviants and to organized aggression, appear to be moving in a "feminine" (less aggressive)

direction; but at the personal level, there seems to be a countertrend toward "masculinity," as shown by the increase in crimes of violence.

The general, overall trend seems to be in the direction of a merging of sex-related values and behavior patterns. The more masculine and feminine values and roles merge, the more role conflict is created for members of society. Women in college, for example, are often not sure whether they should train for careers in the masculine-dominated world of employment, or whether they should accept a more traditional sex role, or both. Role conflicts are also created when members of an organizational group develop different concepts of their positions than those held by others in the organization. Some positions, like that of the

school superintendent, are particularly likely to generate role conflict, because different groups have such widely divergent expectations of what the position holder should or could do. The male college student who serves as a "hasher" in a sorority is an example of how mutually incompatible expectations can lead to role conflict, which, in turn, finds expression in various forms of aggressive behavior. Role conflict may also be resolved by "compartmentalization," whereby an individual shifts the more superficial aspects of his personality to conform with the demands of the situation. Adjustment in complex social situations is also facilitated by role differentiation—an increase in the roles in the individual's repertoire, which, in turn, leads to greater empathy.



*Jim Jowers/  
Nancy Palmer  
Photo Agency*

# Chapter 10

## Personality as a Social Phenomenon

### *Personality defined*

The term "personality," as used by psychologists, refers to the total behavior of the individual, but particularly to those relatively enduring and consistent aspects that cause us to resemble others in some ways and to be totally different and unique in others. This is different from the term "personality" as used by laymen, which usually refers to the more superficial aspects of behavior—what psychologists sometimes call "stimulus value." "Personality," as used psychologically, also includes the more basic, underlying aspects such as *character* (the kind of behavior that is characteristic of an individual especially in key situations), and *temperament* (the individual's affective or emotional tendencies. Both character and temperament influence the way we interact with others, the kinds of attitudes we



develop toward ourselves and others, and our personal style. Stimulus, value, and character are to a large extent the result of social learning, but are also affected by temperament, an aspect of personality that is usually considered to be biologically determined by the kind of hormonal balance we inherit.

As we pointed out in the foregoing chapter, the fact that men and women tend to have somewhat different kinds of personality is due in part to differences in what they inherit biologically. However, note that we say "in part," because one of the major differences between man and the other animals is his capacity to learn an infinite range and variety of behavioral forms. Just as hyperactive Zuni infants learn to be less active than Anglo infants, even so do women in some cultures learn behavior that in our culture would be considered masculine, whereas men may learn patterns that we consider to be essentially feminine. The kind of temperament we are born with may set some of the initial patterns of personality, but what we learn subsequently is even more important.

### *Roles and personality formation*

Most of the characteristics that identify and define us as individuals are the product of social interaction. Inasmuch as each individual interacts with others throughout his life span, and no two interactions are identical, his personality undergoes a continual process of modification. This modification is likely to be slight in highly stable or sheltered environments, such as remote villages, where roles change but little and there are few changes in personnel. Conversely, modification is likely to take place at a more rapid rate when people are required to learn and play a variety of complex and at times unrelated roles in the context of groups whose membership is continually changing.

Our involvement in the roles we play is likely to have some kind of effect on the kinds of

people we become, or, more accurately, are continually becoming. Although a role may be viewed as a kind of psychological garment that we put on and take off and that affects our appearance and behavior for the moment, the fact that this metaphor is appropriate does not necessarily mean that there is no residual effect when we are no longer playing the role in question. For one thing, the sequences of behavior that go to make up a role are learned, which means that they have been reinforced. Once they have been learned, they will reappear all the more readily, whenever situations are encountered that possess the potential for reinforcement. Furthermore, carrying out role-appropriate sequences of behavior requires that we learn certain perceptual styles—certain ways of looking at ourselves and our environment. These percepts enable us to determine what roles are called for in a given situation, how the roles are to be played, and even what kinds of feelings to have about the roles we play and toward ourselves as actors.

Playing of roles is a kind of self-affirmation. As we see ourselves-in-situation, we feel confirmed in our expectations for ourselves, in our values, and so forth. As we move from one situation to another, and from one role to another, we reveal various aspects of ourselves—our personality—to others and to ourselves as well.

A behavior sample drawn from the classroom may help to illustrate this complex interaction of role, personality, affirmation of values and expectations, and self-regarding attitudes. Let us say that Miss Daie, a sixth-grade teacher, has discovered that Dorothy is cheating on a geography quiz. Miss Dale's central role in this situation is that of a teacher. As long as she occupies this position, she is expected to follow the curriculum, assign homework, set quizzes and examinations, grade papers, and so forth. There are also an almost infinite number of subsidiary roles that relate to her position as a teacher. As the classroom

situation changes during the teaching day, she will change from one subsidiary role to another. In this particular instance, her subsidiary role has become more that of a policeman, although some teachers might at this point play a psychotherapist's role, realizing that cheating is a problem of mental health as well as discipline. But Miss Dale is a fairly traditional teacher and she is going to play the role of the policeman or disciplinarian.

Miss Dale's decision to react as a disciplinarian was not a conscious one, in the sense that she did not stop to think of the various roles she might play in this situation and select that of the disciplinarian. Rather, it "came to her naturally"—she saw Dorothy cheating, and before she was even aware of what she was doing, she was moving in to apprehend the culprit. Although Miss Dale would probably deny it, her behavior was to some degree satisfying to her, in the sense that it seemed appropriate. She has learned that teachers are expected to act as disciplinarians at times and has come to expect the same kind of behavior from herself. She has probably also learned that authority figures, including teachers, are expected to take on disciplinary roles when they encounter wrongdoing.

Miss Dale's action in taking on the role of a disciplinarian is also reinforced by colleagues and students. She often hears about how this teacher caught a student red-handed or how that teacher lost control of her class because she neglected to play the disciplinary role or did not play it with enough conviction. Her pupils expect her to play this role as well. Little girls continually come to her with tales of wrongdoing, and when she comes upon a group of children who are doing something they should not, they eye her apprehensively, waiting for the blow to fall—figuratively speaking, of course, because Miss Dale has never been seen to strike a child.

Miss Dale has also learned the values that are basic to the disciplinarian, namely, an

acceptance of the proposition that the norms of society must be upheld, that deviations from these norms must be noted and punished, that authority figures are the proper persons to enforce norms, and so forth.

Miss Dale has, therefore, learned a number of things with respect to her playing the role of the disciplinarian. She has learned that this role is subordinate to the general role of being a teacher, she has learned that she should play it at times, she has learned how to play it, she has learned what kind of expectations to have for herself with respect to the role, what values and attitudes are appropriate, and how to feel as she carries out the duties of the role.

Miss Dale's way of dealing with Dorothy's cheating was to take the test paper from her, mark it with big red "F," and place it in her class roll book. Dorothy put her head down on her desk and cried quietly for a while; the class returned to their quiz, somewhat shaken but at the same time somewhat reassured that crime does not pay and that retribution falls swiftly on anyone who believes otherwise. A few minutes later, the class started the arithmetic lesson for the day, and to all outward appearances the matter had been forgotten. Miss Dale was now playing the subsidiary role of the expositor and critic as she showed the class how to calculate the areas of squares and rectangles and called on the members of the class alphabetically to give answers to the questions in the textbook. She hesitated a little as she came to Dorothy's name, but Dorothy answered correctly without a pause. Everyone relaxed and the lesson went on.

It would appear that Miss Dale has been able to change roles swiftly and easily and has not been in the slightest affected by the necessity to play the role of the disciplinarian. But has she, really? Being a disciplinarian involves playing a certain kind of role, to be sure, but it also means taking on certain attitudes, values, and feelings. Are attitudes, values, and feelings so easily put on and taken off? If one learns

to feel and think along certain lines in one situation, is there a possibility that other situations will evoke similar thoughts and feelings? How will Miss Dale feel, in other words, when she encounters wrong doing in situations in which she is not the teacher? If she sees a man taking a newspaper from a display rack without paying for it, will she ignore him? If her brother tells her about some ploy he uses to pad his expense account, will she refrain from comment?

We would, of course, have to know a great deal more about Miss Dale to predict with any degree of accuracy how she would behave in such situations, but it is reasonably safe to say that school teachers who rather enjoy playing roles of disciplinarians would be more likely to speak up under such circumstances than would, say, beauty parlor operators or clerk typists. People who habitually play certain roles are likely to find opportunities to play the roles outside of the usual contexts. One would expect, therefore, that a lawyer might be unusually critical about the wording of statements, even when he is not functioning as a lawyer, or that physicians would be inclined to be prescriptive about nonmedical matters.

What we are saying is that as we play roles, we learn ways of perceiving ourselves and the world in general, and these ways of perceiving tend to become rather stable and persistent aspects of the self. We also learn a repertory of roles that to a large extent identify and define "who we are." To put this into other words, the roles we learn constitute a significant dimension of our personality.

## *The Self*

Individuals with traditional values who have had considerable experience in playing the roles of sixth-grade teachers tend to behave in somewhat similar ways when they are occupying their official positions not only because of

the patterned expectations of others, but also because the concepts they have of themselves in this position are similar to those of other individuals with similar values occupying the same position. They behave in similar ways, in other words, because their self-concepts are similar.

## *Self-concept and self-image*

When we talk about the self-concepts of sixth-grade teachers, we are referring to a rather general human tendency—the tendency to regard oneself as an object. The term "self-concept" is an abbreviated way of saying "attitudes toward and conceptions about one's self." Our worlds are populated by many people we observe but do not know, a moderate number we know casually, and a few we know quite well. The people we know well are distinguished from the less well-known by the fact that we not only possess more information about them, but also have an interrelated and more or less integrated set of feelings and attitudes regarding them. Furthermore, we tend to think of them as occupying positions and playing roles in a miniature social system. At the center of that social system is the person we know best: *ourselves*. This self represents an individual like the others we know, but differs from the others in the sense that it has greater value—for us.

George Herbert Mead (1934) observed that the self is a product of our symbolic interaction with others and that we can perceive ourselves only as a reflection in the eyes of another. Mead drew heavily on the writings of C. H. Cooley (1902), who described our tendency to use others as a kind of looking glass in which we can view ourselves. "In imagination," he wrote, "we perceive in another's mind some thought of our appearance, manners, aims, deeds, character, friends, and so on, and are variously affected by it." The analogy to the looking glass,

however, falls somewhat short of how we actually respond to the imagined percepts of others. The looking glass is a neutral and uncritical agent, whereas what others perceive in us is affected by the bias of what they are prepared to perceive, and what we think they perceive is further distorted by our own perceptual bias. "The thing that moves us to pride or shame is not the mere mechanical reflection of ourselves, but an imputed sentiment, the imagined effect of this reflection upon another's mind."

The self may thus be thought of as an "image"—the impression it makes on others, and the impression it makes on ourselves, as perceived in terms of the impression we think it makes on others. The self in this sense is referred to at times as the "self-image," a term which is sometimes used as synonymous with "self-concept." Strictly speaking, however, self-image refers more to the *impression* aspects of the self, whereas self-concept includes the idea of impression but also such other aspects as attitudes, values, motives, goals, expectations, and the like.

### *Role relationships and the self*

The first pair of roles in which we are involved is, of course, the infant-mother relationship. By the time the child has developed any inkling of his self as an object, he is already launched into a more complex set of role relationships: those of his immediate family. Through their evaluations of and reactions to him, he learns to evaluate himself and his own behavior. He not only becomes an object to himself but he also tends to take on the views of others toward himself. Indeed, a very important part of the role-relationship is mutual evaluation. Others indicate to us, directly or indirectly, what they think of the way we are carrying out our part of the role relationship, and we reciprocate in kind.

As the child emerges from the home into

neighborhood play groups and school, he becomes involved in more complexly organized sets of role relationships and learns to use the percepts of an ever-widening circle of others in appraising and reshaping his self-concept. M. Brewster Smith (1969) notes that

' As the "generalized other" whose perspective the child adopts becomes progressively *more* generalized, his reflected view of himself becomes more "objective"—less dependent upon the contingencies of particular role relationships—at the same time that he becomes equipped with the role repertory to participate effectively in the full range of social life [pp. 237-238].

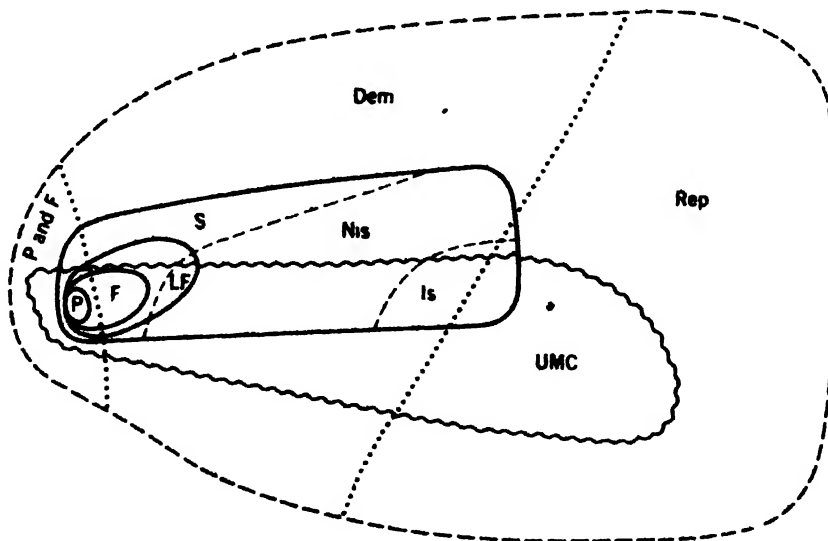
### *Field theory and self theory*

The self theory we have been discussing is based on the writings of sociologists Mead and Cooley. Field theory, as introduced by Kurt Lewin (1935), stems from a different tradition—that of physics. Newton's theory of mechanics was basically an explanation of physical phenomena in terms of the behavior between particles. This idea was challenged, as Morton Deutsch (1968) has pointed out, by the electromagnetic field that influences the behavior of particles and that has a distinct reality apart from them. As a further extension of such concepts, Einstein developed the idea of space as a distribution of forces within a given environment, that, in turn, determine how objects will behave.

Lewin theories are quite similar. He maintained that all psychological events (i.e., behavior) are functions of the individual's life space, which consists of the person and his environment, viewed as one complex constellation of interdependent factors. Lewin liked to express the relationship between the individual and his environment in the form of a topological map or diagram, like that depicted in Figure 10-1. The behavior of the individual (P) in this

**Topological maps, like Figure 10-1, can be**

Field-theory ideas in considerably simplified form may be found in the writings of Carl R. Rogers (1951, 1961) and Arthur W. Combs and Donald Snygg (1959), who, like Lewin, conceived of the self as existing in and responding to a field of psychological forces. *Self theory* is a term that has been applied to such concepts. Psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan (1947) also



**Figure 10-1.** Topological map of the fields occupied by a young adult male, who is married, is an upper-middle-class, third-generation Japanese-American, and is a member of the Peace and Freedom party Key: P—person; F—family; LF—larger (extended) family; Is—Issei (first-generation Japanese-Americans); Nis—Nisei (second-generation Japanese Americans); S—Sansei (third-generation Japanese-Americans); UMC—upper-middle class; Rep—Republicans; Dem—Democrats; P&F—Peace and Freedom Party.

contributed to self theory in his writings about interpersonal attitudes and feelings. Although each proponent of a field, self, or interpersonal theory introduces elements that cause his theory to differ somewhat from the others, the theories do have much in common. For one thing, they all emphasize perception and all can be referred to as "cognitive theories." Lewin's field forces, for example, are the demands and stresses that are perceived or recognized by the individual. Interpersonal relations play a large part in all the theories; indeed, Harry Stack Sullivan insists that personality exists only in terms of our interaction with others.

### *Psychoanalytic theories of the self*

Although psychoanalytic theories tend to assign more importance to instinctual drives than does self theory, they have contributed to ideas relating to the nature of the self. For instance, some behavioral scientists use Sigmund Freud's term, "ego," to refer to the self. However, Freud uses the term "ego" in two somewhat different ways. The ego may refer to an entity or object. Freud is using the term in this sense when he refers to the ego being dominated by the id (instinctual processes) or by the superego (the moral standards of society as incorporated into the conscience). Freud also uses "ego" to refer to processes whereby the individual becomes aware of external reality and makes judgments or decisions about what actions are relevant and appropriate. The term "self" generally refers to *image*, the impression one has about one's behavior and one's impact on others, and to *identity*, the relationship between oneself and the surrounding social environment. Both ego and self are included in the more general concept of personality.

The ego is said to play a central and vital role in the organism's attempt to deal with instinctual and moral forces, as well as with external reality. If it is placed under too much

pressure from any of these sources, it is likely to operate ineffectively. Certain distortions in perception are, therefore, invoked in order to "protect" the ego from injury. These distortions are what Freud calls "ego defenses." For example, repression enables the ego to deny or ignore certain kinds of forbidden motives; projection enables the ego to attribute the individual's own unworthy motives to others; sublimation enables the individual's unworthy motives to be expressed in socially acceptable ways without outraging the superego.

People who have a firm grasp on reality are said to have "ego strength," whereas the individual who is swayed from one extreme to another by conflicting demands from superego, id, and the social environment is said to have a "weak ego."

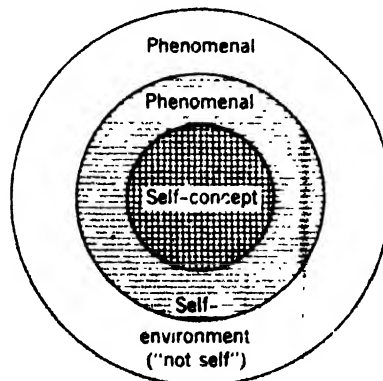
*The "ideal self."* Freud also referred to the "ego ideal," an aspect of the superego that serves as a reference point or standard in controlling behavior. Other psychologists refer to the "self-ideal" or the "ideal self," terms that have much the same meaning. The use of such terms assumes a difference between the self that one perceives as the "real self" and the self that one ought to have or ought to be. Carl Rogers (1951) theorized that the existence of a large gap between the perceived self and the self-ideal is generally an unhealthy state of affairs. Individuals whose behavior continually falls short of what they believe it should be are likely to be plagued by anxiety, self-hate, and feelings of inferiority. One of the objects of psychotherapy, according to Rogers, is to help individuals attain a greater and fuller degree of self-acceptance. Evidence for this point of view is provided by studies carried out at Rogers' clinic, which showed that discrepancies between patients' perceived selves and their self-ideals tended to diminish during the course of successful psychotherapy (Rogers

& Dymond, 1954). Similarly, Gerald P. Koocher (1971) used pretest and posttest measures of the discrepancy between ideal self and self-concept of 65 boys aged 7 to 15 who attended a YMCA summer camp, and he found that learning to swim reduced the discrepancy significantly. Boys who already knew how to swim or who did not learn to swim showed no changes in discrepancy between ideal self and self-concept.

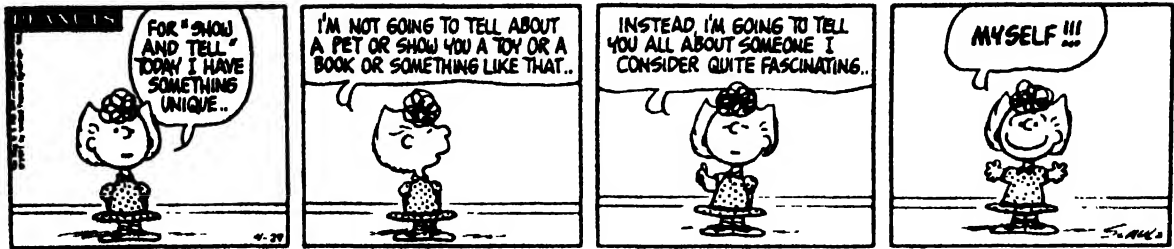
There is some question, however, whether the existence of a disparity between ideal self and self-concept should be considered a sign of poor mental health. Phyllis Katz and Edward Zigler (1967) found that the disparity between the "real self" (or self-concept) and the "ideal self" tends to increase between the ages of 11 and 17, with more intelligent children showing greater disparity than less intelligent ones. Their research suggests that as individuals become more mature and more aware of their potentialities, they develop higher and higher expectations of themselves. A certain degree of anxiety tends to accompany a perceived disparity between actual and potential accomplishment, but a moderate degree of anxiety appears to have positive value for optimum personal development. The problem lies in keeping anxiety within reasonable limits. Katz and Zigler note that as individuals progress to higher developmental levels, their increased capacity to deal with problems also enables them to find more problems or to create more problems for themselves. When anxiety reaches painful levels and begins to interfere with the ability to behave effectively and to enjoy life, it is time to consider Carl Rogers' writings and find ways to bring both the perceived self and the self-ideal back into a more comfortable relationship with each other.

**The phenomenal self.** Arthur W. Combs and Donald Snygg (1959) conceived of the self-concept as the center of a system of percepts

that they called the *phenomenal environment*—the environment as it is perceived by the individual (see Figure 10-2). The portion of the phenomenal environment that is perceived as being related or somehow involved with the self they termed the *phenomenal self*. Within this area are to be found objects and events that the individual sees as somehow important to him. The use of the modifier "my" may be considered as an indicator of what is included in the phenomenal self. "His car" or "cars in general" (as long as they can be perceived) may be within my phenomenal environment, but not within the boundaries of my phenomenal self. However, if I buy one of these cars, it becomes "my car" and becomes located somewhere within the phenomenal self. If the auto is a sports car, and I am a "hot engine" fancier, the chances are that it will be closer to my self-concept than if it is a second-hand sedan that I use only to drive between home and work. But even a car in which there is little self-involvement can suddenly become psychologically very important. If I am standing near my office window and hear the crash of metal in collision, I may think only, "Some fool didn't watch where he was going." But when I go down stairs later to drive home and find that



**Figure 10-2.** A perceptual view of the self and its environment (Combs & Snygg, 1959).



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it was *my* car that was smashed, I suddenly feel very involved in the accident. I will probably think, feel, and act for the moment as though I myself had been hit. I will feel outraged, hostile, angry and intent on securing punitive damages from the culprit. To any detached, objective observer, the car is definitely not me nor a part of me, yet I am acting as though it were a part of me. From a phenomenological point of view, it is an extension of myself and hence may be considered as located within the boundaries of the phenomenal self.

If I behave in an outraged way because of the damage that my car has sustained, it is because I perceive that my phenomenal self is sustaining a *threat*. Any event may become a threat, if the individual perceives it as bringing about some unwelcome change within his system of percepts—what might be called the *self-structure*. Combs and Snygg state that the primary need of the organism is to enhance and maintain the phenomenal self. Anything that might interfere with our ability to enhance and maintain the phenomenal self is perceived as a threat. In the instance just cited, the damage to the car becomes a threat because someone has been able to damage an object with which the self is identified and has been able to escape with impunity. In the example of the individual who refuses to believe that he has any talent, the investment is in the *percept*; it is his way of perceiving himself that is being threatened and he defends it by being rigid and dogmatic about evidence or opinions to the contrary.

### *The self as a source of meaning*

We organize our phenomenal worlds in ways that enable us to enhance and maintain our phenomenal selves. In other words, we sort things out, so to speak, in terms of whether they have a relationship to us and in terms of whether that relationship is positive, negative, or neutral. The resulting arrangement enables us to determine the degree to which we should concern ourselves with the events and objects we encounter and the kind of concern we should express.

Let us say that Lyle Morrow is very much interested in marine biology and wants to work for a Ph.D. in that field when he graduates. One day Lyle gets on a homeward-bound bus that is half full, and as he walks down the aisle, he notes that one of the passengers ahead of him is carrying a marine biology textbook. Lyle decides to sit down beside him and get acquainted.

Lyle had his choice of any number of empty seats, yet he chose the one next to the person with marine biology textbook. Why? A self-theory explanation would hold that Lyle's concept of himself as a marine biologist would be more enhanced by talking to another biologist than by sitting in just any seat.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lyle's behavior could also be explained in terms of balance theory or attraction between persons possessing similar traits, however, this does not mean that the theories compete with one another, but rather that they represent somewhat different ways of looking at the same phenomenon.



Our daily lives are full of instances in which we make choices—some of them major, but most of them minor—that have the purpose of strengthening and confirming our concepts of ourselves and the world as we see it. We perceive or do not perceive events in terms of whether they will enhance and maintain our phenomenal selves. We cannot perceive everything and hence tend to notice only those events that are somehow related to us, that is, have meaning for us. Structuring our environment in this way enables us to make predictions, to order our behavior, and to determine relationships between ourselves and past, present, or future events.

When the system we have created is put under stress—*threatened*, to use the term proposed by Combs and Snygg—we are likely to behave as though we personally are threatened. Charles Freed is a Democrat. This means that he not only tends to vote for candidates who are Democrats, but also identifies himself with the party: it lies to some extent within the boundaries of his phenomenal self. He also finds his identification with the party and its aims a convenient source of guidelines that can be used to order his thinking about social and political issues. We can understand, therefore, why he stalked out of the house in a rage when his father-in-law, Mr. Zack, said that he could not understand how any sensible person could have anything to do with a party that was being run by fools, cowards, and liars. After his wife and daughter scolded him for saying such a tactless thing, Mr. Zack tried unsuccessfully to smooth things over by saying that he didn't mean that Charles was any of those things—he was referring only to the candidates. But Charles remained angry and would not speak to his father-in-law for a month. In this instance, Charles felt threatened partly because his identity (his self-concept) was under attack, but also because his way of looking at things (as a Democrat) was attacked as well.

When the elections were held, most of the Republican candidates won. Mr. Zack, with rare self-restraint, refrained from expressing his jubilation. *His* phenomenal self had been enhanced by the event, whereas Charles' had been placed under additional stress. Charles felt depressed for some weeks. Not only did he feel personally defeated, but he wondered whether Democrats were really right after all. Up until the date of the election he had felt no need to change his way of looking at things, but now that the results showed conclusively that most people saw things the Republican way, Charles began to think that he should take a fresh look at the issues. When predictions turn out badly, we may question the system we have used for perceiving ourselves and our environment.

## *Self-Esteem*

### *Self-esteem and evaluation by others*

The amount of value we ascribe to the self is our "self-esteem." Like the other aspects of the self, this is learned from others and becomes a reflection of how others regard us, or, more accurately, the value we think others attach to us as persons. One's behavior is likely to reflect his self-esteem, and this, in turn, has a reassuring effect on others. Thus there is a reciprocal interaction between one's self-esteem and the esteem expressed for one by others. This proposition was put to the test by S. Frank Miyamoto and Sanford M. Dornbusch (1956), who asked the members of ten groups (four fraternities and sororities and six college classes) to rate themselves and one another on four factors: intelligence, self-confidence, physical attractiveness, and likableness. They found that people with high self-ratings tended to be rated high by others and that the opposite was true of persons who had low self-ratings. They also

asked their subjects to guess how others rated them and found that again persons with high self-ratings tended to assume that others gave them good ratings. When they compared self-ratings with both assumed and actual ratings, they found that self-ratings were closer to assumed than to actual ratings. In other words, persons were apparently more influenced by what they *thought* others felt about them than what others actually *did* feel.

Low self-esteem leads individuals to behave in ways that are self-derogatory. A number of studies conducted in 1950 and earlier showed that black children, when offered a choice between a black doll and a white doll, tended to prefer the white one. They also were more inclined to point to the black doll when asked "Which doll looks bad?" More recent research suggests that the picture is changing, however. Susan Harris and John R. Braun (1971) conducted a study among black children in interracial schools located in suburban and inner-city areas and found, contrary to previous studies, that most of the black children now favor black dolls. The children also took tests to measure self-esteem—that is, the extent to which they showed accepting attitudes toward themselves as individuals. Children who showed favorable attitudes toward the black dolls in three out of the four test situations made significantly higher scores on the self-esteem test than did those who selected the black doll in only one or two out of the four test situations. In other words, higher levels of self-esteem were accompanied by a greater willingness to accept one's racial characteristics.

### *Child-parent relations and self-esteem*

Carl R. Rogers (1951) maintains that everyone has within himself the potentiality for growth in positive directions. When the individual is placed in a permissive, accepting environment, the process of self-actualization occurs.

One of the first and most important aspects of the self-experience of the ordinary child is that he is loved by his parents. He perceives himself as lovable, worthy of love, and his relationship to his parents is one of affection. He experiences all this with satisfaction. This is a significant and core element of the structure of self as it begins to form [p. 499].

Thomas W. Miller (1971) has carried Rogers' description of the child-parent relationship a few steps further. Miller observes:

In the perceptual field of the child, the family serves as the primary social unit. The parents, within this family structure, act as socializing agents in providing goals and values from which the child develops various patterns of behavior. Such behavioral patterns form the basis for interaction with others. In turn, these behavior patterns elicit reactions in the form of verbal and/or non-verbal responses from these significant others. These responses serve as indicators to the child of who he is and how others feel about him. The more positive responses provide input for a favorable concept of self and result in self-actualization. The more negative the attitudes and feelings expressed through the responses of others, the more incongruent is the state of the individual and the less likely are his chances of attaining self-actualization [p. 241].

Miller tested hypotheses based on these concepts by administering a self-esteem inventory to eighth graders and a questionnaire measuring parental attitudes to their mothers. Results showed positive correlations between children's self-esteem and their mothers' positive regard, genuineness, and empathy toward them. Among children in the slum schools, self-esteem was also positively correlated with

maternal tendencies to be more objective and less judgmental in responding to the behavior of their children.

### *Distortions in self-perception*

When individuals grow up in an environment in which they learn negative self-regarding attitudes, they are likely to maintain these concepts in spite of all evidence to the contrary. Everyone knows individuals whose self-evaluations vary widely from the opinions that others have of them—the person, for example, who has strong potentialities and yet who is continually derogating himself and who will not make the effort to develop them. Everyone tells him he has talent, yet he steadfastly refuses to believe that he does. It is not our intention here to propose any general kind of theory to account for such distortion in self-perception, there probably are factors that are unique to each individual's experience that lead him to misperceive himself. It is important to note, however, that people are rarely successful in convincing such a person that he does indeed have the degree of talent that everyone says he has. Indeed, the misperception seems to be impervious to any evidence that would contradict it.

What we are describing here is a situation in which people appear to be resistive to social learning and which apparently contradicts what we have said about the power of others in shaping our attitudes and beliefs about ourselves. There are two aspects of this situation that deserve special attention. One is that we have learned certain attitudes about ourselves (which may or may not be valid, although that is not the point, and now others are trying to get us to *unlearn* these attitudes. The second aspect is the fact that others, in praising or criticizing us, are trying to influence us by telling us that we are wrong in our self-appraisal. This attitude that they know us better than we do is likely to arouse a degree of defensiveness on our part.

It threatens our feeling of security and shakes our belief that we are our own masters and are fully cognizant of what we are or are not.

What is being threatened, therefore, is not so much an isolated belief as it is part of a much larger system of perceptions, a system that derives strength and endurance from the fact that all elements are interrelated and integrated. The person who believes he has no talent, for example, cannot change that percept unless he also changes a great deal of what he believes about himself and the world. This is no easy task, and most people are exceedingly reluctant to undertake it, even though by any objective criterion they might have much to gain.

### *Flight from self*

Distortions in self-concepts are both causes and effects of anxiety. Perceptions of threat lead to behavior against the source of threat, that is, behavior characterized by anger and aggressiveness or behavior that leads away from the cause, as characterized by fear or anxiety. In complex, urbanized societies, sources of threat are likely to be remote, indirect, or ambiguous, and anxiety is likely to be the result. Situations that are not readily understandable have a high degree of "meaninglessness," as we noted in Chapter 2, and hence are prime sources of anxiety.

Anxiety is a very painful emotion, and we will go to great lengths to avoid situations that are likely to evoke it. The *ego defenses* we mentioned in our brief discussion of psychoanalytic theories of the self serve the purpose of eliminating or reducing anxiety. Our relations with others are a prime source of anxiety, partly because there is a degree of unpredictability or ambiguity in all our dealings with others, partly because our social performance is always being evaluated by others as well as by ourselves.

One strategy we use in reducing ambiguity,

unpredictability, and anxiety is that of taking steps to ensure that our behavior is as rational and consistent as possible. As Philip G. Zimbardo (1969) says:

... consistency becomes a self-imposed principle in order for the individual to maintain a conception of himself as a normal member of society who, in behaving as others expect him to, gains their social recognition (the most potent of all reinforcers) as a rational decision maker, whose decisions help him control his environment [p. 280].

Zimbardo (1970) notes further that in behaving rationally and consistently, the individual assumes responsibility for himself as a member of society. This decision to make such a commitment, according to Zimbardo, *individuates* the individual who makes it. Through such a process of individuation, a person "sets himself in opposition to all who refuse to act individually, and thus separates himself from tribal ties to undifferentiated (safer) group action" [pp. 239-240].

The opposite of this process is *deindividuation*, which we discussed briefly in Chapter 5, in connection with authoritarian trends in behavior. Zimbardo describes deindividuation as a process in which a person loses some of his identity as an individual and becomes less able to exercise impulse control. His normal controls, which are based on self-observation and evaluation, no longer operate. As a result, he may engage in antisocial, selfish, greedy, power-seeking, destructive, or lustful behavior. On the other hand, he may be overcome by intense feelings of happiness or sorrow, as well as open love for others.

Through deindividuation, a person also divests himself of the feeling of responsibility for his actions. He may deindividuate because life stresses have become so great that the costs of being rational and responsible seem greater than the rewards, or he may find himself in a situation in which the logic and rationality

that seemed appropriate in conventional circumstances no longer seem to apply. Deindividuation is most likely to occur when the individual is in an unfamiliar environment (traveling, away from home), is in a crowd (where he is anonymous), or is under the influence of a psychoactive drug.

### *Escape from self through drugs*

Deindividuation can be accomplished by taking sufficient quantities of almost any substance that affects the mood of the individual, although the psychoactive drugs like cannabis, alcohol, and LSD are the usual agents. With small doses or less potent drugs, the extent to which the individual wishes to deindividuate is, of course, an important factor. In one test of the effects of marijuana, investigators compared the reactions of subjects who had never smoked the drug with those of experienced users. The naive subjects noted only that "things seemed to take longer" and reported little euphoria and no distortion of visual and auditory phenomena. The experienced users, on the other hand, said that the same dosage made them feel fairly "high." Such research suggests that the urge to deindividuate is a necessary first step in serious drug usage.

"Hard" drugs, like heroin, give a more definite reaction, and the user has fewer options, as far as deindividuation is concerned, but even here personal predilections are a determining factor, with respect to continued usage. The individual who seeks release from his internal controls is the one who is likely to seek the experience again and again, whereas a person who is made uncomfortable by the loss of control is likely to avoid it.

Who are those who become addicted to the use of drugs? Richard H. Blum (1971), who is a leading expert in drug use and its psychology, states that they are the weak, inadequate, or vulnerable:

... the psychologically troubled, the de-

prived and disordered poor, the very young whose exposure and acceptance of drugs illicitly offered comes before their strength to resist peer pressure or their knowledge of ill effects, the unstructured children from overly-permissive homes whose parents could not set limits or invoke authority, and . . . the children whose parents were oppressively strict without consistency or affection. . . . [p. 103].

For the latter group, drug use becomes a form of rebellion.

Blum (1972) has identified the family backgrounds of young people who are least or most likely to use drugs. Low-risk families are likely to be strict in behavior requirements, to be churchgoers, to have a generally happy relationship among its members, and to be politically conservative. High-risk families, on the other hand, are likely to be permissive, to consume more alcohol, to make considerable use of both prescription and illicit drugs, to be politically inclined toward the liberal-radical left, to express mistrust of or disrespect for authority, to have either no religious affiliation or to prefer liberal religious groups, and to engage in more intrafamily quarrels and arguments. Blum adds that high-risk individuals are likely to be marked by unusually high self-concern and self-indulgence, as expressed through the pursuit of pleasure, a disregard for the rights of others, and a de-emphasis on self-discipline. The values and attitudes that underlie drug usage, then, appear to be acquired through social learning—through the imitation of parental models.

Henry Miller (1971), who has done research in the Haight-Ashbury district in San Francisco, corroborates the picture presented by Blum. He describes the drug user as essentially an irresponsible person whose life style is characterized by "hanging loose." Miller defines hanging loose as a "liberation from the obligations presumed in conventional interpersonal

involvement and internal moral pressures" [p. 36]—in other words, it is a form of deindividuation. He goes on to say that the hang-loose state is more of an aspiration than a condition. It is never really attained, and this makes the dilemma of drug-involved youth all the more painful. The need for commitment, he says, is a prerequisite for humanity. The young are hungry for the human experience, yet they reject the quality that makes the human experience possible. Drugs provide one escape from the confusion: with drugs, nothing has to be resolved, there is no commitment, and one need only care about the sensory release. Taking on the norms and values of the "drug culture" facilitates the transformation and the process of deindividuation. It is difficult to know which causes the more significant personality change: the drugs themselves or the drug culture. Probably both interact to produce the well-known behavior pattern of the social dropout.

Although the majority of the population expresses extremely negative views toward legalizing drug usage, there is a viewpoint expressed by many intellectuals to the effect that heroin should be made legally available to addicts. Newitt, Singer, and Kahn (1971) note that although this apparently liberal attitude seems to be based on the enlightened idea that people should be allowed to do as they please, it may also stem from "an elitist writing-off not only of the existing addicts but of the urban slum population as a whole" [p. 112]. Their unspoken attitude seems to be: "Let the inadequate ones destroy themselves if they wish; we won't interfere."

There seems to be no doubt that while the drug problem is understandable from the various facets presented by the experts, there are no easy solutions. It is not inconceivable that the problem may simply diminish on its own, to be replaced by another. The social history of man contains accounts of many fads and ma-

nias that appear and then vanish apparently of their own accord. There was the mania for dancing in the streets during the Middle Ages and for buying tulip bulbs in Holland in the early 18th century. The mass production of distilled liquor led to widespread alcoholism in England later in the same century. It was a time when alehouses advertised "Drunk for a penny, dead drunk for tuppence." Alcoholism is still a major problem, but its dimensions are not as extensive as they were in Georgian England. It is easy to blame such aberrations on the troubled times, but times have always been difficult, especially for the poor. War is another type of mass movement that facilitates deindividuation, one that dominates the scene for a while and then is supplanted by peace, with its attendant problems. Like the recent drug fad, wars can always be explained in terms of current issues and stresses, but the urge to escape pressing responsibilities through deindividuation is a contributing, if not an underlying, factor. It is not so much in the times and its troubles that we find the explanation for the various mass pathologies, but in the way that people regard them. The reality that people perceive is the reality they respond to.

## *Social Dependence and Independence*

### *Independence, self-esteem, and creativity*

The individual who has a firm sense of "who he is" and who takes responsibility for his own behavior is one who, as Zimbardo puts it, *individuates* himself and resists turning over his destiny to group control. Such an individual is what David Riesman (1950) would call the *inner-directed* person. This ability to take a detached view of one's relations to groups in which one holds membership calls for a con-

siderable degree of self-esteem and independence.

Traits of the foregoing type have been studied for a number of years at the Institute of Personality Assessment and Research on the Berkeley campus of the University of California. In one of the research reports emanating from the Institute, Donald W. MacKinnon (1962) compared traits of highly successful and creative architects with those rating lower on these variables. Results showed that the successful and creative subjects rated high on independence, as well as on characteristics consistent with self-esteem. Creative architects were inclined to describe themselves as individualistic, independent, determined, industrious, and enthusiastic, whereas lower-ranking creative architects tended to use such terms as responsible, sincere, tolerant, reliable, dependable, and understanding, in describing themselves. In other words, the typical less-creative architect revealed a self-image of a more passive, less involved, more other-directed person, whereas the more creative architects showed a high degree of involvement in their work as a form of self-expression. Both groups displayed a high degree of responsibility, but the less creative architects showed more concern about their responsibility toward others, whereas the more creative architects were concerned about their responsibility toward themselves and for their work.

Similar findings resulted when Leonard V. Gordon (1966) compared scores made by samples taken from a general college population and those made by Peace Corps volunteers. His results, which are briefly reported in Table 10-1, show that most college students, when contrasted with Peace Corpsmen, appear to be more concerned with achieving pleasant relations with others and with avoiding situations that might produce problems. They are also more inclined to look to their environment as a source of direction and support than are the

**Table 10-1.** *Scales of the Survey of Interpersonal Values and Survey of Personal Values that Discriminated between College Students in General and Peace Corps Volunteers (Gordon, 1966)*

College students in general placed greater value on:	Peace Corps volunteers placed greater value on:
Support: being treated with kindness and understanding	Benevolence: doing things for other people
Conformity: conforming to rules and social conventions	Decisiveness: being definite and decisive
Recognition: being thought of as important	Leadership: being in a position of leadership or authority (women only)
Orderliness: being orderly and neat	Variety: having new and varied experiences
Economic Gain: economic or material gain	Achievement: accomplishing something important
	Independence: being free to do what one wants to do (women only)

**Peace Corpsmen.** Peace Corpsmen, on the other hand, are more interested in finding opportunities to challenge the environment and to change it. They appear to be more interested in confronting and solving problems. In short, the typical Peace Corps volunteer appears to be more independent than the average college student.

It may be worthwhile to utter a warning at this point with respect to the interpretation of research findings on conformity, dependence, and authoritarianism. It is easy to fall into the

trap of assuming that independence is a totally "good thing" and that it consists mainly of defying and resisting authority, authority figures, and rules and regulations in general. In actuality, people who score high on independence, creativity, effectiveness, and task orientation do not necessarily have negative feelings about authority figures or regulations. As the research we have cited suggests, they are quite capable of learning from authority figures, but concentrate on the material related to the task at hand. Authority figures who insist on behavior irrelevant to the main task, however, quite naturally evoke feelings of irritation in independent people. The same holds true with rules and regulations: if they are functional and related to the task, task-oriented and independent people are likely to accept them. If they are not, they will find ways of circumventing them or, if there is no escape, are likely to accept them more or less philosophically.

It is important, however, to distinguish between the independent, task-oriented, and creative person and the one whose gestures of independence and defiance become an end in themselves. For such people, nonconformity becomes more important than "getting the job done."

Robert J. Smith (1967) conducted a study showing that rebels and conformers differ from truly independent people and that both actually resemble each other. Smith devised a questionnaire to measure nonconformity and administered it to 162 male college students. Those who scored high on the test he termed the "rebels," because their responses indicated that they could be depended on to take an "anti" position on a wide range of socially approved types of behavior. Those who scored low, he called the "conformers," because they showed a readiness to accept socially approved behavior in a routine and unquestioning fashion. The middle-range scorers became the "independents," because they showed themselves as

ambivalent about sociocultural norms: some were accepted and others not, but in any case, they neither categorically accepted nor rejected the norms merely because most people accepted them. The three groups were then studied as to their scores on other psychological measures. The independents scored significantly higher than both the rebels and the conformers on scales measuring positive self-regard, ego strength, or self-acceptance. They also scored higher than the other two groups on a scale measuring social responsibility and freedom from impulsiveness and self-centeredness. On both of these scales, the rebels scored lower than the conformers, but the difference was not significant. In other words, rebels and conformers, as measured by these scales, were more like each other than they were like the independents. On a scale measuring the ability to make constructive use of conforming behavior to achieve and to accomplish desired goals, the independents scored higher than the other two groups, but the difference between them and the conformers was not significant.

Further differences appeared among the three groups when they played a two-person nonzero-sum game for cash rewards. In this game players find themselves tempted to make competitive responses aimed at exploiting or punishing their opponents. Such responses, however, make them vulnerable to attack and result in their losing more in the long run. Cooperative choices, on the other hand, are likely to result in higher mutual gains. The game, in other words, provides temptation to make unwise competitive moves but rewards the less tempting but wiser attempts to cooperate. Smith predicted that the conformers would be most cooperative and that the rebels would be least cooperative. However, results showed that it was the independents who played the game most successfully, whereas rebels, as predicted, made the poorest score. Rebels earned

57 cents on the average; conformists, 69 cents; and independents, 89 cents. Smith's research thus appears to confirm the everyday observation that the rewards in this life go primarily to the independents, with the conformers and the rebels following behind in that order.

### *Social dependence and social learning*

There is some evidence that people whose behavioral ratings place them at extremes of the dependent-independent continuum have different styles of social learning and that this difference manifests itself at a very early age. Dorothea Ross (1966) taught two groups of twenty-six nursery-school children to run a play post office. The groups had been selected out of 101 children in the school on the basis of the amount of dependent behavior they displayed, that is, on the extent to which the children asked for help in doing things, sought reassurance from adults, stayed close to adults, and displayed attention-getting behavior. The two groups represented those children who showed the most and the fewest dependency symptoms. As the experimenter showed the children how to run the post office, she engaged in two kinds of behaviors. One set was relevant to operating the office (collecting money and giving change, stamping letters and mailing them in the proper slot, and the like), and the other set was irrelevant and nonfunctional (taking an indirect route to the mailbox, putting one foot on the chair while telephoning, and the like). Children who had been rated low in dependency learned more of the behavior relevant to running the post office, and the high-dependent children learned more of the irrelevant ones. Ross explained the difference in terms of the greater stress placed by parents of the less dependent children on achievement. The latter children were definitely more "task oriented." They paid close attention to the behaviors displayed by the model that were



relevant to the job of running the post office, and tended to ignore the irrelevant ones. The high-dependent children, on the other hand, gave equal attention to all the model's behaviors. In actuality, the high-dependent children learned more than the low-dependent ones, for they learned both relevant and irrelevant behaviors. For such children, the fact that an authority figure was showing them something was the important thing, whereas for the low-dependent children the important thing was understanding the task and doing it correctly.

### *Birth Order and Personality*

Although it is common knowledge that childhood experiences have an important effect on attitudes and behavior as adults, most of us are aware of the relationship only in a vague and unsystematic way. It has remained for psychologists to classify, measure, and analyze the relevant variables.

#### *Success differentials between first-borns and later-borns*

Individuals who as children occupied the first-born position among their siblings apparently have an advantage as adults, as far as intellectual, social, and economic successes are concerned. Harold E. Jones (1954) did a biographical study of eminent Englishmen, gifted children, persons listed in *American men of science*, and persons listed in *Who's who in America*. He found that the first-born were overrepresented in each of these groups, irrespective of the size of the families from which they came. Whereas one would expect, by chance, that 50% of men from two-child families listed in *Who's who* would be first-born, the percentage actually was 64. Thirty-three percent of men from three-child families listed in *American men of science*

would, by chance, be expected to be first-born, but the actual percentage was 44, and so forth.

William D. Altus (1965) has found a similar phenomenon. As Figure 10-3 shows, a far greater percentage of first-borns, than would be expected by chance, make top scores on the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. For example, although one would expect only 50% of students from two-child families to have become 'finalists,' the actual figure was 66%. Similar discrepancies exist for finalists from three- and four-child families.

These findings suggest that first-borns are likely to be more successful in competitions of this sort than are later-borns. First-borns, as Figure 10-3 also shows, are also more likely to enter universities. This overrepresentation of first-borns in university populations has been noted for many years—as far back as 1928. It is, in fact, a routine finding. Therefore, the common-sense explanation that the unusual number of first-born students in college populations today is due to high postwar birth rates can be dismissed. The national percentage of first births in 1945 was 35%, whereas the overall percentage of first-borns entering Santa Barbara in 1963, eighteen years later, was 60%. (Both figures include only children, as well as first-borns.)<sup>2</sup>

Another common-sense explanation of the findings reported by Jones and Altus is the tradition of making the resources of the family available for the education of the first-born son. This should, of course, give him an advantage.

<sup>2</sup>The birth-order percentages most recently available, included here for purposes of comparison, are from a survey of high school students conducted by the Purdue Opinion Panel in September, 1971. A breakdown of the students sampled by them showed the following percentages: oldest, 28%, youngest, 24%, middle, 43%, and only, 4%. Social class, as indicated by mother's education, appeared to have little effect on these percentages (Erlick & Starry, 1972).

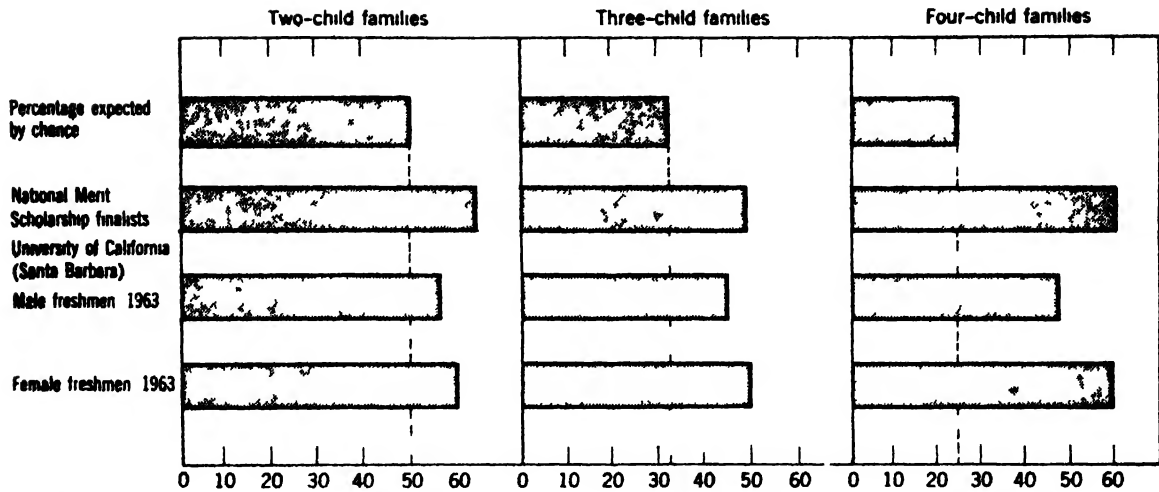


Figure 10-3 Percentages of first born according to size of family who became National Merit Scholarship Finalists or who entered the University of California at Santa Barbara in 1963 (Altus, 1965)

over his siblings. However, the fact that Altus data apply to women as well as men points to the probability that first-borns enjoy some kind of psychological advantage, irrespective of either sex or tradition. The greater success of first-borns as adults appears to be related to their earlier successes in school, where they, in contrast to later-borns, are more likely to meet teachers' expectations, show more susceptibility to social pressure, exhibit more information-seeking behavior, are judged as more serious, are more sensitive to tension-producing situations, and are considered to be less aggressive. All these factors appear to increase their achievement motivation and their academic performance (Bradley, 1968).

### Birth order and socializing experiences

We noted earlier that tendencies to deviate from group norms in one variable are generally associated with tendencies to deviate in other ways, and this is certainly true of first-borns. Prominence and success in intellectual activities apparently go with social success as well. C

Norman Alexander, Jr. (1966) conducted a study of the relationship between birth order and social acceptance for male seniors in thirty high schools and found that first-born students were more likely to be chosen by other students as friends. He found, furthermore, that first-borns were more likely to reciprocate friendship choices and to pick less popular students as friends than were later-born students.

A number of investigators (e.g., Schachter, 1959, Mehrabian & Ksionzky, 1970) have reported that first-borns tend to have a higher need for affiliation and/or dependency than later-borns, but other research raises questions about such findings. In one study with kindergartners, first-born males tended to engage in more solitary play, which is not consistent with high needs for affiliation or dependency, although first-born females engaged in less play of this sort. The researchers concluded from this and other evidence that first-borns of both sexes tended to be more strongly sex-typed than other children. Other data from this study showed that first-borns were not only more creative than later-born children, but were

more popular as well (Laosa and Brophy, 1970).

Tendencies of first-borns to affiliate in stress situations, which we noted in Chapter 2, may be due to their greater socialization, rather than to affiliation and dependency needs. This socialization may result from certain experiences that are more likely to be the lot of the first-born than of the later-born child—that serving as a “parent-substitute,” for example. When the children go to the Saturday matinee, it is the oldest who is given the money for the tickets and told to watch out for the others. If something goes wrong, it is he who is blamed. The roles of the oldest child are thus more precisely defined than are those of the other children. As he carries out his tasks of serving as a guardian and a parental representative, he finds himself expressing the values and copying the behavioral patterns of his parents. Even though he is a minor authority figure, he takes on the values, attitudes, percepts, and expectations, and role behaviors that are characteristic of anyone who occupies a position of authority. It is hardly surprising that he relates better to adults than his siblings do. Nor is it surprising that other children tend to look up to him and value him for his leadership qualities.

A study by Reginald G. Smart (1965) of students at the University of Toronto shows that men who were first-born children were more likely to be involved in social and recreational clubs and to serve as elected officers.

First-borns also tend to be more supportive, which may account for their greater popularity. Robert L. Weiss (1966) had high school students listen to tape-recorded speeches and to try to “maintain rapport” with the speakers. They were asked to imagine that the speaker was talking to them individually, as if the two of them were alone. Whenever the listener wanted to indicate rapport or give support to what the speaker was saying, he was to press a button. Weiss found that first-born and only

children were inclined to do more button-pressing and were thus more supportive than were later-born children.

### *Birth order and parental attention*

A number of experts (e.g., Schachter, 1959) have pointed out that the first-born child has the unique experience of first having a monopoly of his parents' attention, and then having the monopoly broken by the appearance of the next child. This quite understandably leads to jealousy and sibling rivalry. Even after the appearance of the second- and later-born siblings, however, the first-born seems to demand and receive some kind of priority of attention from his parents, as well as from others. The predilection of the first-born for leadership and administrative roles in adolescence and adulthood may be due not only to his having learned supervisory roles as an elder child, but also to his early experiences in being “on stage”<sup>3</sup>

The first-born also gets a special type of attention from his mother. Irma Hilton (1967) found that mothers showed more interfering behavior with first-borns' attempts to solve puzzles. Mary K. Rothbart (1971) contrasted behavior of mothers of five-year-old first-borns (each of whom had siblings two years younger) with the behavior of mothers of five-year-old second-borns (each of whom had siblings two years older). The mothers supervised children's performance on five tasks. There was no difference in the amount of time spent by the two groups of mothers in interacting with their children, but mothers of first-borns gave more technical instructions, exhibited greater pressure for achievement, and displayed greater anxious intrusiveness into their performance,

<sup>3</sup>One is tempted to relate those early demands for attention to the finding of one pair of investigators that out of a sample of 35 stripteasers, 31 (89½%) were first-born (Skipper & McCaghy, 1970).

the more so when the first-born was a girl. An interesting birth-order difference showed up when the experimenters asked if the mother and her child would please clean up the playroom after the test sessions, pointing to an adult-sized and a child-sized broom. The behavior of the pair was observed through a one-way screen, and the participation of the child was rated, in order to obtain a measure of the mother's willingness to encourage responsible behavior on the part of her child. As Figure 10-4 indicates, first-born children were more likely to be involved in the clean-up process, with the difference among boys being most pronounced.

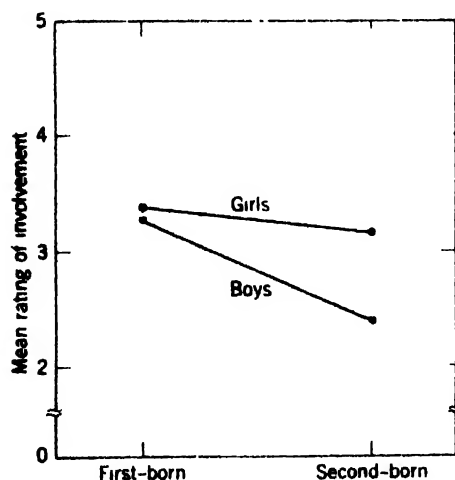
The evidence we have presented shows that individuals who were first-born in their families tend to have personal characteristics that are somewhat different from those who were later-born. The differences tend to be slight—they probably account for less than 5% of the variation in behavior, overall—but the point is that they do tend to be consistent. We suggest that the characteristics we have noted tend to occur

in first-borns more than in others, because first-borns had more similar experiences in childhood and played roles that were similar. The personality differences between first- and later-borns are apparently quite marked during childhood—a number of investigators confirm this—but there are significant differences in later years as well. We have noted their greater successes and popularity, but in addition, they tend to be viewed as colder, more task-oriented, and more conservative than, say, second-borns (McArthur, 1956).

Birth-order research has attracted a great deal of attention on the part of psychologists in recent years, in large part because it provides the opportunity to test theories about child-rearing practices, social role, personality development, and social behavior. As we begin to understand the differences between the way parents treat first-borns and later-borns, we can use the parents as vicarious experimenters in studies in which differences in treatment accorded children in different birth-order positions become the independent variables, and differences in personality traits or social behavior become dependent variables. In short, birth order promises to provide one of the prime examples for demonstrating the relationship between the social environment and personality.

## Summary

The term "personality" refers to the relatively enduring and consistent aspects of our behavior that cause us to resemble others in some ways and to be unique in other ways. One aspect is stimulus value, which is close to the layman's concept of personality. Personality as conceived by the psychologist also includes the concepts of character and temperament. Although some aspects of personality, particularly those included under the heading of



**Figure 10-4.** Extent to which mothers involved five-year-olds of different birth-order ranks in a clean-up task (Rotbart, 1971).

temperament, may be biologically determined, personality is for the most part composed of learned patterns of behavior.

As we play the more significant roles in our lives, we learn ways of perceiving ourselves and our environment. These perceptual styles tend to become rather stable and persisting aspects of our personality. The roles that we learn also identify and define "who we are" and constitute a major dimension of our personality.

The self-concept—attitudes toward and conceptions of one's self—if affected by the roles we play and affects the roles as well. As children, we use the percepts others have of us as a basis for our developing self-concept. The wider the circle of others whose percepts we are using, the more objective our view of ourself becomes. The self may be described as an element in a field of social forces, an idea taken by Kurt Lewin from post-Newtonian physics. Field theory serves as a basis for self-theory, as expounded in different forms by Harry Stack Sullivan, Carl Rogers, Donald Snygg, and Arthur W. Combs. Sigmund Freud's ideas about ego processes also have contributed to self-theory. His concept of the ego-ideal is similar to self-theory's ideal self. Although there is some evidence that a gap between the self as perceived by the individual and his ideal self is to some degree pathological, other research shows that the gap normally increases with maturity, as for example, during the adolescent years.

According to Combs and Snygg, portions of the phenomenal or perceived environment may be differentiated as the phenomenal self—those aspects of the environment in which the individual is involved. A portion of the phenomenal self is further differentiated as the self-concept. The self-concept of each individual, therefore, lies at the center of the phenomenal environment. We perceive and structure the phenomenal environment in ways that enable us to enhance and maintain the phe-

nomenal self. When the structure we have created is put under stress (threatened), we are likely to behave as though we ourselves are threatened.

Self-esteem is the amount of value we ascribe to our self and is based on the esteem others have for us. Like other attributes of personality, it develops in childhood and is fostered by positive, accepting, and satisfying relationships with parents. Individuals who have negative childhood experiences often develop low self-esteem, which they may maintain in the face of evidence to the contrary, because to think otherwise would threaten their self-system. Threats to the self-system characteristically arouse anxiety, a painful emotion we prefer to avoid at all costs. Ambiguity is especially productive of anxiety, and for that reason we impose order on ourselves to make our behavior appear as rational as possible to ourselves and others. Such attempts to behave rationally, according to Philip G. Zimbardo, involve making a responsible commitment as members of society, a process he calls *individuation*. Through the reverse of that process, *deindividuation*, a person attempts to divest himself of such responsibility and thus becomes less of an individual. Deindividuation may be accomplished by turning over one's control to others, entering the drug environment, or taking psychoactive drugs. Where drugs are concerned, a person deindividuates deliberately. Chronic and severe drug users are likely to be the weak, the inadequate, and the vulnerable, particularly those who wish no ties or responsibility and who only want to "hang loose."

Persons with high levels of self-esteem are likely to rate high on independence. Tests administered to architects show that the more successful ones tended to be more independent and less conforming in a number of ways than less successful ones were. A study comparing individuals characterized as independent, con-

forming, or rebellious, showed that the rebels were least accepting of social norms and the conformers were most accepting, with the independents occupying a medial position. When the subjects played a game calling for cooperation, the independents showed themselves most able to cooperate, and the rebels, least able. Among children, a high degree of dependency appears to be associated with a tendency to learn irrelevancies.

Birth-order studies show how expectations, roles, values, and attitudes characteristic of certain positions lead to recognizable personality trends. Successful people, as indicated by listings in *American men of science* and *Who's who in America*, are more likely to have been first-born than later born in their families. First-born individuals are also more inclined to attend col-

lege, to make top scores on college entrance tests, to be socially accepted by their peers, score high in n Ach, and receive top marks in school. First-borns are more likely to have played supervisory roles as parent-substitutes for their younger siblings during childhood. In contrast to later-borns, first-borns are likely to receive more attention from parents and siblings when they are children, and research shows that mothers tend to be more anxiously involved in their achievement than in that of younger sibs. Although personality and behavioral differences between first- and later-borns tend to be slight, they are nonetheless consistent, and birth order provides unique opportunities for psychologists wishing to conduct research into the relationship between social environment and personality.



*Ken Heyman*

# Chapter 11

## Cultural Influences on Personality and Social Behavior

In Chapter 10 we presented some examples of how interpersonal experiences influence perceptual styles and self-regarding attitudes, which, in turn, influence social behavior—the interaction, in other words, between personality and the interpersonal environment. In the present chapter we continue to give our attention to the interpersonal environment, but shall view it as part of a broader context: the culture.

A fish is not aware that he is in water, nor are we generally aware that we live in a culture. David French (1963), the anthropologist, notes that it is easy for us to “forget” our culture, even after we have become intellectually convinced that we have one. Our culture becomes for us “the way people do things,” and it ordinarily comes as a shock when we step into



another culture and find that people do things differently.

Culture consists of the overriding systems of values, beliefs, norms, artifacts, and symbols that have been developed by a society and are shared by its members. Each society develops ways of coping with its environment and making sense out of it. These approaches tend to become systematized and are transmitted to the following generations. Where environments are relatively stable, cultures may persist over long periods of time with relatively little change, but marked changes in the environment lead to changes in the cultures. When a plains society is forced to move to the high mountains, many of its practices are no longer appropriate and must be altered. If a hostile tribe settles nearby, the culture must adapt itself to that fact as well, if the society is to survive. Changes are also produced by the members themselves; just as cultural norms are strengthened when members conform, they are also weakened if enough members develop other patterns of behavior. There is, therefore, a constant interaction between members of a society and the culture they have inherited and transmit to their children.

Cultures function to reduce variability in the environment and make it more predictable and manageable. The effect of variations in the weather, for example, is reduced by clothing, housing, covered and insulated transportation, air conditioning, and central heating. The systems of artifacts thus developed become, in turn, part of the environment with which the society must cope.

The behavior patterns produced by a society also serve to reduce variations in human behavior. Social norms limit the way in which a society's members may express themselves and interact with one another, but the compensating reward for this loss of freedom is the ability to predict, anticipate, and cope with the behavior of others. These limitations are not

restrictive in any complete or absolute sense, for every culture permits some areas of freedom for individual variation. It may prescribe religious rituals that must be very strictly adhered to, even to the point that any deviation requires that the ritual be started over again. But at the same time it may allow considerable freedom in the way in which social equals may interact with one another in informal situations. As a very general rule, the least variation in individual behavior is permitted by primitive cultures and the widest variation by industrialized and urbanized cultures. But even in the latter instances, variation is sufficiently restricted to the point that cultural differences can be recognized almost at a glance. We look at the way a gift is wrapped and say, "The Japanese do these things so well, don't they?" Or we are introduced to a stranger, listen to talk for a minute, and then ask, "Aren't you from Texas?"

The restrictions or norms imposed by a society's culture are seldom viewed as objectionable by its members. As we noted earlier, they become so natural, so much a part of us, that we are oblivious of their existence, and it is only when we encounter others who behave according to a different set of norms that we are conscious of such a thing as "culture."

Such encounters can be disturbing and unsettling, or interesting and exciting, depending on the orientation of the individual. Investigations carried on in the contexts of other cultures, however, can not only give us a better understanding of people in cultures other than our own, but can also reveal the general principles underlying social behavior, as Muzafer Sherif (1963) has noted. Without the cross-cultural test, we have no way of knowing whether findings based on research using subjects in one culture have any relevance for human behavior in general. To put this in other terms, in order to determine what the general

principles are that determine human behavior, hypotheses must be tested in other cultures as well as our own. For example, our conclusion that middle-class and lower-class parents differ in child-rearing practices, in ways that have important implications for the personality development of children, is only of moderate interest if it is based on observations made in the North American culture, but when evidence is produced showing that similar social-class differences appear in other cultures (e.g., Prothro, 1966; Danziger, 1960a,b), the finding becomes not only more significant, but more interesting as well.

### *Social Learning during the Early Developmental Years*

A Mexican child becomes a Mexican national at birth, but if he is to grow up to be a Mexican in a fuller sense of the word, he must learn to behave like a Mexican. The same can be said for any child born into and growing up within any culturally identifiable group.

Alex Inkeles (1963) has described the cultural learning process in the following terms:

Implicit in the idea that the members of a society share a system of action is the assumption that they have *learned* the appropriate responses to the cues given by others. The adults in a society are the end products of a long process of prior conditioning. They are thus equipped with a large repertory of standardized responses to meet the situations their sociocultural system will present. Societies experience a continuous turnover in personnel while maintaining relative stability in culture and social structure. The key to this continuity lies, in large measure, in the fact that successive generations learn their culture in all its complexity. They must also acquire a predisposition to accept, and an ability to act in accord with,

the requirements of that part of the culture embedded in laws, art patterns, and a host of institutions. The key to this learning lies in the forms and content of childhood and later training [p. 364].<sup>1</sup>

### *Development during infancy*

Each individual represents, through his behavior, the culture into which he was born. As soon as the neonate (the newborn infant) makes its appearance, it begins to interact with its parents' culture. In effect, the culture immediately goes into action to give the neonate the treatment and the place or position reserved for it. Neonates have many things in common, irrespective of the culture into which they are born; they are helpless, they spend a great deal of time sleeping, they require a liquid diet, and so forth; but in spite of these basic similarities, each cultural group has a rather well-developed set of concepts about how infants should be treated and what can be expected of them. Infants in some Polish villages are tightly wrapped in swaddling clothes, because otherwise they might "thrash around and hurt themselves." In some cultures, the neonate becomes the center of attention and admiration; in others, he is relegated to the background and ignored.

The interaction between mother and infant is higher during the first few months of his life than it is at any other stage in his development, largely, of course, because he needs more attention during this period. Although there are great individual variations in the ways mothers in the same cultural context treat their infants, there are also some basic trends that are characteristic of certain cultures. Take the matter of soiling. All infants soil their clothing through urination and defecation and must

<sup>1</sup>Copyright 1963 by the McGraw-Hill Book Co. Reprinted by permission.

therefore be cleaned. The mother's reaction to the chore of cleaning provides her with opportunities to interact with the infant and transmit feelings and attitudes. Although filth has a high 'nuisance value' in most cultures, some mothers will make little fuss over the cleaning, while others will act annoyed. Mothers in some cultures go about the task of cleaning the infant in a matter-of-fact manner, without comment. Some do it in a business-like manner, even brusquely or roughly. It is characteristic of mothers in other cultures to chide, 'Oh you naughty boy, look what you've done to your nice clean clothes,' and the like. Still other mothers look upon the task as an additional opportunity to interact with the infant, to fondle him, and to croon little phrases of love and affection.

It is impossible to say at what point the infant begins to grasp the essentials of his mother's attitude toward soiling. Very possibly he will get the message long before he is able to put it into words. But what is more important for his development as a person and as a member of a cultural group is that this soiling-and-cleaning sequence of behavior is one of several channels of interaction between him and the culture. The mother's behavior toward the child during this sequence gives her a chance to tell him who he is and what is expected of him—or, perhaps more precisely, what *will* be expected of him. And the more consistent her generalized attitudes and treatment, the clearer the message will be and the more readily he will grasp it when he has reached the stage of development in which he can become aware of who he is and how he feels about himself.

Contrast the attitudes of Rajput mothers in northern India, who believe that the future physique, temperament, and personal characteristics of infants are determined at birth by fate, with those of middle-class New England mothers, who believe that each infant repres-

ents a 'bundle of potentialities,' and that the kind of individual he becomes depends on the way in which parents, teachers, and peers mold these potentialities. It is hardly surprising that Rajput mothers take a rather passive attitude toward child rearing. After all, what difference does it make what mothers do, if what the child will become was determined at birth? New England mothers, on the other hand, work actively at the task of child rearing, reading books, consulting experts, and showing considerable anxiety in their attempt to do the 'right things' in developing the child's potentialities to the utmost (Whiting & Whiting, 1960).

### *Later influences during childhood*

The word *infant* means, literally, a nontalking being, and it is the child's development of the ability to communicate that marks his emergence from infancy into active participation with other members of the society into which he was born. When the child is able to talk, parents and other representatives of the culture go to work in earnest at the task of molding his behavior, values, attitudes, beliefs, and, inevitably, his personality.

The way in which middle-class children in America are taught self-reliance is one example. They are told

Smile and the world smiles with you,  
Cry and you cry alone.

Not all middle-class Americans learn to be self-reliant, of course, but everyone is aware of it as an ideal and values himself and his behavior in accordance with the extent to which he has achieved this ideal. In traditional China, a man who became economically dependent on his adult children not only accepted this status, but boasted of it, telling everyone what good and dutiful children he had. An American parent in the same situation is likely to be ashamed

of his dependency, to resent any reference to it, and to seek to reestablish his independence at the first possible opportunity (Hsu, 1961).

Self-sufficiency and independence are taught American children as much by the kind and quality of their parents' behavior toward them, as by what they are told. One of the best ways to observe this interaction is to watch children playing in a park. American children are generally granted a great deal of freedom when it comes to interacting with other children, getting dirty, running and shouting, and so forth. This permissiveness is consistent with the idea, expressed earlier, that children's potentialities must be developed. In other words, freedom to run, interact with others, and get dirty enables a child to find ways of developing his own potentialities. American parents also believe that such freedom enables children to learn how to cope with things, make their own decisions, solve their own problems, take responsibility for their own actions, and the like. American children are, generally speaking, expected to learn how to deal with their physical and social environment without the aid or intervention of adults, providing, of course, that the tasks are commensurate with their ability and that other tabus of the culture (such as harassing smaller children, expropriating the property of others, or being destructive) are not violated.

But French parents and their children behave quite differently. Maria Wolfenstein (1955) made a number of observations in Paris parks and noted that many children sit for long periods very quietly beside their parents and do not seem to need to run about as American children do. Children who shout are reproved by their parents. Although they are allowed to play in the sand, they are admonished not to get dirty. In fact, many children are brought to the parks in very elegant and unwashable clothes. A child playing in the sand very typically squats at his mother's feet, his bottom an

inch off the ground but never touching. His hands but nothing else may get dirty, and he may frequently turn to his mother to have her wipe off his hands. Mothers and grandparents frequently express concern lest a given activity might prove to be too strenuous. A six-year-old boy was playing catch with an older brother. His return throws were a little wild, and he was told after every throw "*Doucement! Doucement!*" (Not so hard!), even though there was no danger of his hitting any bystanders. As children approach one another, the respective parents eye them mistrustfully, anticipating trouble. A mother called to her five-year-old son, who was going toward a three-year-old, "*Laisse le petit garçon!*" (Leave him alone!) It turned out that the older boy only wanted to play with the younger one, but his mother's anxious admonition indicated that she feared otherwise.

What parents are doing when they admonish, direct, encourage, or otherwise attempt to mold the behavior of their children is to project a constellation of images of how people should behave and what one should expect of others and of the world. The French child who is ordered not to go closer to the smaller boy is being told that it is best to stay away from unknown persons because there may be trouble, that is, the older boy may inadvertently injure the smaller boy, or the parents of the smaller child might object. Furthermore, the mother is presenting herself as someone who "knows best" and who should be consulted at every turn. When the French children observed by Wolfenstein encountered interference from other children, they turned to their mothers for help and protection. American children, on the contrary, are usually expected to take care of their own interpersonal difficulties, and not to come running to their mothers. Turning to authority figures for help is, according to the American view, something that is done only as a last resort and is taken as evidence that one has failed.

There are other qualities that appear in the interaction of these two groups of parents with their children. The American parents appear to be telling their children that people ought to be energetic and adventurous in their approach to life, that activity and restlessness are not only permissible, but quite normal, and perhaps even desirable. One's place in the world depends in part on what he has been able to affirm, maintain, and defend. Although the American child's future may be ambiguous and to some extent unpredictable, it can nevertheless be shaped by the energetic, adventurous person who is willing to meet problems head on. French parents, on the other hand, are saying that the world has dangers but is in the charge of powerful, omniscient individuals, who have imposed a certain structure. Children should accept and respect this structure and not try to change it. Furthermore, if one behaves impulsively and heedlessly, persons in authority will take him in hand and will reprimand him for behaving in such an asocial manner.

There is a general feeling on the part of French parents that American children are *mal élevés*—badly brought up. According to European standards, American children are much too spontaneous, outspoken, and defiant of authority. European parents are inclined to believe that this behavior results from the fact that American parents subscribe to erroneous ideas about the effects of repression and discipline. What they overlook, of course, is that spontaneity, independence in judgment, and lack of reverence for authority are characteristic of the American value structure in general. This is demonstrated by the fact that American adolescents overseas regard European young people as overly inhibited, tattlers and tale-bearers, and tied to their mothers' apron strings. Accepting this judgment as a fact, without regard to differences in culture, is as erroneous as accusing American children of being *mal élevés* (Elkind, 1967).

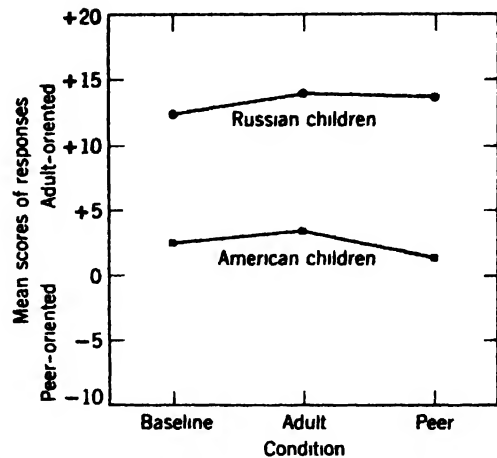
The attitudes of French parents are but a reflection and an extension of a more generalized set of values that apply to all dimensions of French life. An examination of French business practices shows that there is much more concern with maintaining the status quo than there is in the American business world. The managers and directors of the typical American business are more concerned with increasing sales and efficiency and extending the field of their operations than are their opposite numbers in France, as Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber (1968) has noted. Indeed, much of the current hostility expressed toward America by French businessmen and government officials is a direct or indirect result of the more or less successful invasion of the French economy by American business firms. Although the participation of Americans in the economic life of France has undoubtedly produced benefits and helped increase the per capita income of France, their presence is deeply resented. Every time an American company buys into a major French firm, there is consternation and at times even a degree of panic. The feeling is widespread that Americans do not *belong* in France, that they are poaching on private preserves, and that their aggressiveness and venturesomeness are not in good taste. The point is that there is a relationship between the attitudes French people express in their child rearing and those that they express in their business behavior. Such attitudes and the consistency and the firmness with which they are expressed help give the French culture the qualities that make it uniquely French. There is also a corresponding degree of consistency in the attitudes that Americans express in *their* child rearing and business behavior. Furthermore, members of the two groups are in both instances quite sure that they are expressing and responding to the "way people are" (human nature) and the "way the world is" (reality).

### *The child and the peer group*

Similar differences appear when comparisons are made of the responses of American children and those of children from other cultures. Urie Bronfenbrenner (1970) has reported on the results of an attitude survey conducted with Russian and American twelve-year-olds. The children were asked how they would behave in ten different situations in which peer and adult standards of behavior were in opposition to each other. A typical item dealt with the child's finding the teacher's answer sheet for the next day's quiz and his experiencing the pressure on the part of his peers to say nothing about it, so that all might get better marks. In the "baseline" condition, the children were told that no one but the investigators would see their responses; in the "adult" condition, they were told that their responses would be posted on a chart that would be seen by their parents at a meeting scheduled for the following week; and in the "peer" condition, the children were told that the chart would be displayed, instead, to their class. The replies to the ten situations were scored on a scale that could total as high as +25 (completely adult-oriented) or as low as -25 (completely peer-oriented).

As Figure 11-1 shows, there were vast differences between the ways in which Russian children and American children responded to the problems that had been posed. Russian children were not only more adult-oriented in their baseline replies, but also the possibility that either their parents or their peers might learn of their decisions caused them to make responses that were even *more* adult-oriented. Although the responses of American children were slightly "over the line" on the adult side, they were decidedly more peer-oriented in the baseline condition and became all the more so when they learned that their peers would hear of their decisions.

Bronfenbrenner's findings can be explained



*Figure 11-1. Differences between responses given by Russian and American children to situations involving moral dilemmas, in terms of the degree to which their replies were adult- or peer-oriented (after Bronfenbrenner, 1970).*

partly in terms of the fact that peer values and adult values are much closer to each other in Russia, whereas in America, they diverge considerably. The idea of a peer society existing separate from and in opposition to adult society is much more a part of the American way of life than the Russian. Hence, when the Russian child learns that his decisions will be seen by his peers, he makes them even more adultlike, whereas the American child wants his peers to think that he is even more antiadult than he really is.

In addition to being more rebellious where adult norms are concerned, the American child is evidently more aggressive. At least that is the impression given by results of a study conducted by Spencer Kagan and Millard C. Madsen (1972), in which the behavior of rural-dwelling Mexican children aged 7 to 11 and Anglo-American children the same age from lower-income districts near Los Angeles was compared. The contexts in which the observations were made were a number of different game situations, all played with two children,

matched according to sex and culture. In one experiment, one of the children was given a prize, like a ballpoint pen, and the other child was permitted to play the game in such a way that he could either take the prize away from the first child, let him keep it, or avoid the decision. Although the majority of both Anglo-American and Mexican children were inclined to play so they could take the prize away from the first child, three times as many Mexican as Anglo-American children played the game in such a way that the first child was able to keep his prize. In a similar experiment, the second child did not have the option of taking the prize from the first one, but instead, could play the game so that either the first child could keep his prize or that he would forfeit it to the experimenter, in which case neither child would get it. In this game, more than three-fourths of the Anglo-American children played so that the other child would lose his prize, whereas only half as many Mexican children played in this way. The behavior of both groups of children in the first game could be explained in terms of natural selfishness, with the Mexican children being somewhat less greedy, but in the second game, the results can be explained only in terms of the higher level of hostility and/or aggressiveness of the Anglo-American children.

In still another version of the game, the first child was allowed to make moves in which he could defend his prize, submit to its capture by the other child, or merely avoid conflict. In this game, Anglo-American children sometimes challenged the other child and sometimes avoided conflict, but they never submitted. Mexican children, on the other hand, sometimes submitted and sometimes avoided conflict, but almost never challenged the other child.

The investigators concluded that both groups behaved irrationally in the experiments: the Anglo-American children, in engaging in

conflict even when they had nothing to gain, and the Mexican children, in passively submitting even when they could keep their prize. One explanation of the difference may be that American parents tolerate much more aggressive behavior than Mexican parents do. Such an explanation is supported by everyday observations of the two cultures, as well as by studies showing that American parents are inclined to be more permissive toward competition, self-defense, arguing, and other types of socialized aggression.

### *Differences in Cultural Style*

Although it is tempting to extrapolate childhood personality trends in a straight line relationship to adult patterns, a realistic examination of the two modes of behavior show that the relationship is much more complex. A great deal takes place between the elementary school years and adulthood. There is no doubt that these observations of French, Russian, Anglo-American, and Mexican children tell us something about differences among adults belonging to the respective cultures, but at the present moment they are more suggestive than definitive. It is possible that these earlier tendencies persist in a kind of undercurrent in adult personalities, but if so, they also exist side by side with other traits. The aggressiveness of American children, for example, does seem to be related to the energetic and forceful behavior that observers agree characterizes American adults. A survey by Dean Peabody (1968) shows that Filipino and Chinese college students living in Manila tend to see Americans as more forceful than Japanese, who, in turn, are seen as more forceful than either Chinese or Filipinos. Americans are also seen as more independent than the other three groups and less cautious than any group except Filipinos, and more active than any group except the

Japanese. These traits would be more or less consistent with the childhood personality patterns we have noted in the studies just discussed. On the other hand, Americans are also seen as the most generous and the most cooperative of the four groups, a behavior pattern that is inconsistent with the selfish, dog-in-the-manger attitude of the Anglo-American children in the Kagan-Madsen study just discussed.

### *Independence and individuality*

French adults also display behavior that seems to be at odds with their early treatment. Although French children are, by American standards, suppressed, dominated, and bullied by their parents, they nevertheless turn out to be adults who have a well-established international reputation for being highly independent and nonconformist. Such behavior is not as inconsistent with childhood patterns as it appears, however. American children are encouraged to interact with their peers and permitted to develop a kind of "peer culture" which has standards that are often at odds with the adult culture, as the Bronfenbrenner data show. French children are discouraged from developing their own standards of conduct, and there is firm insistence on the principle that "father (or mother) knows best." As a consequence, we would expect that French adults would be *less* influenced by their peers than would people in other cultures.

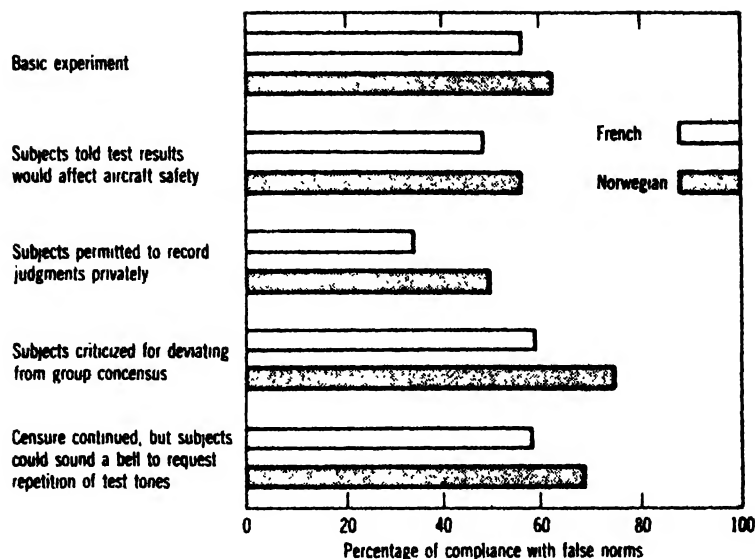
The obvious test for this hypothesis is the Asch situation, described in Chapter 6, in which subjects hear what they believe are the judgments of the other members of their group and are thus led to doubt the evidence of their own eyes. We do not have any data from a French-American study of this phenomenon, but we do have the findings of a study by Stanley Milgram (1961) that shows the French to be more nonconforming than Norwegians. In

one of Milgram's experiments, French students sat in booths and listened to tones through earphones. They then heard what they thought were other subjects expressing judgments about the tones, whereupon they expressed their own judgment. In reality, what they heard were pretaped judgments made by the experimenter's confederates who had been coached to give the incorrect response on sixteen out of thirty trials. Similar experiments were conducted with Norwegian students.

Confirmation of the French reputation for independence was demonstrated when the Norwegian students proved to be more willing to agree with the false reports. When students were told that the study was very important because results would be used in research dealing with aircraft safety, the amount of conformity to false norms dropped a little for both groups of students, but French students still conformed less than the Norwegians. The least amount of conformity to false norms was obtained when students were permitted to record their judgments privately, rather than announcing them aloud, while the greatest amount of conformity resulted when students heard criticism and abuse—"Voulez-vous faire remarquer?" or "Skal du stikke deg ut?" (Are you trying to show off?)—whenever their judgments differed from the false norm. In a final series of trials, students were permitted to press a bell to indicate that they wished to hear a pair of tones a second time. No comment was made when they asked for a replay of the tones, but they were criticized when they differed from the others. Under these conditions, Norwegians felt a little reassured, but there was no difference on the part of the French students. Fourteen of the twenty French subjects asked for a replay of tones, whereas only five of the Norwegians did so.

The results, as depicted in Figure 11-2, show the variations in conformity under the various experimental conditions and also demonstrate





*Figure 11-2. Differences in compliances on the part of French and Norwegian students under social pressure (Milgram, 1961).*

the consistency with which French students resisted conformity. No matter how the data are analyzed, they point to the greater independence on the part of French students. Twelve percent of the Norwegian students conformed to the false norms on all sixteen of the critical trials, as contrasted with only 1% of the French. Forty-one percent of the French students never yielded to the false norm, whereas only 25% of the Norwegians were nonyielders.

One of the explanations for the difference in behavior between French and Norwegian students lies in the fact that the members of each national group tend to perceive and react to a given situation in a different fashion. Not only are Norwegians inclined to depend more on the judgment of others for the way in which they judge reality, but they also appear to regard the judgment and approval of their peers in a more positive way.

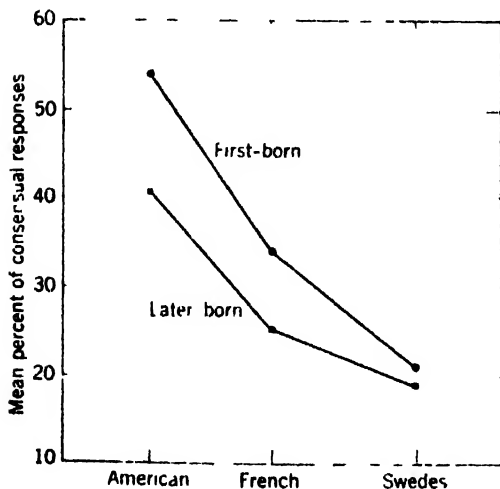
The results of the Milgram study would suggest that Norwegians are more group-reliant than the French. But what about other Scan-

dinavian cultures? Whereas the Norwegians have a reputation for being gregarious and socially accessible, the Swedes are reputed to be unsociable and introverted. According to information gathered by Fredrick Koenig (1971), Swedes are less responsive to their children than American or French parents, and strive to develop within them a sense of independence and emotional self-reliance.

Koenig conducted a comparative study of social aspects of the self-concept among American, French, and Swedish subjects. His device was the Twenty Statement Test, in which respondents are asked to make twenty statements defining or identifying themselves—answers to the question: "Who am I?" The test can be scored in many ways, but Koenig was particularly interested in the percentage of "consensual" replies. Consensual responses are aspects of the self as defined by others, especially those that indicate some kind of anchorage in a social system, such as *Lutheran, sister, student, and politically conservative*. "Subcon-

sensual" responses are those that are subjective, personalized, and idiosyncratic, that need further explanation by the respondent, such as *tired, funky, concerned, and anxious to get out of here*. The higher the proportion of consensual responses, the more the individual is apparently aware of and concerned about his relations with others, individually and collectively. Incidentally, in light of the research on birth-order effects that we discussed in Chapter 10, we would expect that first-borns (who rate higher on leadership, popularity, and affiliation behavior than later-borns) would score higher than later-borns in the percentage of consensual responses.

Koenigs' results indicated that Americans made more consensual responses than French subjects, who made more than Swedes. Furthermore, first-borns in all three cultures were more consensually oriented than later-borns, as Figure 11-3 shows. Koenigs' results are not only consistent with cultural stereotypes about Swedes, but they also show the expected difference between French and Americans. Birth

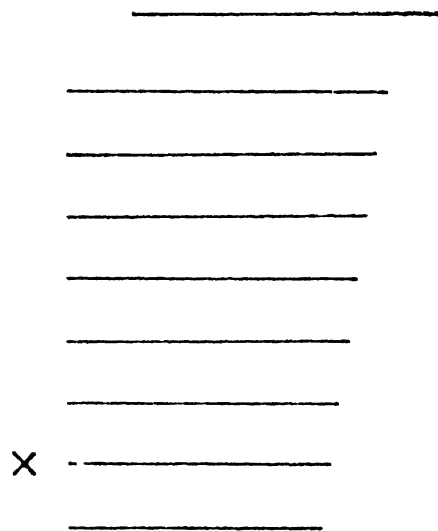


**Figure 11-3.** Percentages of consensual (i.e., socially oriented) responses made by first-born and later-born American, French, and Swedish subjects to the question, "Who am I?" (Koenig, 1971).

order differences are also in line with expectations.

The relationship between group orientation and nonconformity was also explored by J. W. Berry (1967), who exposed Scottish, Eskimo, and Temne (a West African Tribe) subjects to a false-norm situation. The device he used is depicted in Figure 11-4. It consists of a reference line, followed by eight lines of varying length. The subject is asked to say which of the comparison lines is the same length as the reference line. The experimenter offers to "help" the subject by saying that most people say it is the sixth line, or whatever. In Figure 11-4, the correct answer is the second line, and the experimenter has suggested the seventh line as the right one.

Berry expected that Eskimo and Scottish subjects would show less conformity than the



**Figure 11-4.** Sample page from a test sheet used in an experiment to test a subject's willingness to modify his judgment in conformity to a false norm (Berry, 1967. Copyright © 1967 by the American Psychological Association. Reprinted by permission.)

Temne. He based this hypothesis on anthropologists' reports that Eskimos tend to be lenient in disciplining their children and permit a great deal of individualism among them. The Eskimo culture also prizes independence, self-reliance, and venturesomeness. The non-conformity and independence of Scottish people is not only legendary, but, like that of the French, is confirmed by many observers. The Temne raise one crop of rice a year, and the yield is collected by the village, to be doled out to each family during the year, in accordance with its requirements and the amount available for distribution. Such a situation makes a for a high degree of interdependence. Hence, it comes as no surprise to learn that although the Temne indulge their infants, strict conformity to norms is expected of children, deviations are severely disciplined, and individuality is not tolerated.

Berry's results confirmed his hypotheses. Out of a maximum conformity score of 15, the Temne averaged about 9; the Scottish subjects, 4; and the Eskimos,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ .

### *Cultural differences in the perception of interpersonal relations*

The research we have cited in the foregoing discussion suggests that "reality" is to a large degree governed by cultural norms. In some cultures, the individual is free to trust his own senses or his personal judgment; in others, he is expected to look to the group for guidance. What each culture provides for its members, therefore, is a particular way of looking at reality, the environment, and oneself as well.

This is particularly true when it comes to interpersonal relations. Triandis, Vassiliou, and Nassiakou (1968) have made extensive and detailed comparisons of Greek and American perceptions of roles as a way of describing the two "subjective cultures"—the cultures as they are perceived by their respective members.

One of their methods is that of comparing different role perceptions. In what ways, for example, do Americans and Greeks differ in their perceptions of the proper relationship a mother should have toward her son? As Table 11-1 indicates, there are some similarities between the two cultures, but the "status differential" between American mothers and their sons is slightly less than between Greek mothers and their sons. American mothers expect to be companions to their sons on occasion, as "Go to movie with" and "Share responsibility with" suggest. Greek mothers have few ideas along these lines, but instead, as the investigators point out, expect "trouble" from their sons, and as a consequence are expected to help, study with, advise, feel sorry for, and not be impatient with them.

Foreman-laborer roles are to some extent similar in the two cultures, but the American foreman, as the investigators indicate, is expected to engage in more "give and take" with an employee, whereas the Greek foreman is expected to be more exploitive, domineering, and aloof.

Adamantia Pollis (1965) has observed that the Greek's self-concept tends to be quite different from the concepts individuals have of themselves in other Western cultures. Whereas other cultures emphasize the individual's responsibility to himself in determining who he is, what his goals are, and what his behavior should be, the Greek culture defines the person otherwise: "Self-definition is in terms of group relatedness and not as an individual; existence as an individual separate from these groups is inconceivable. Nothing demonstrates more dramatically the absence of the notion of an autonomous individual than the absence of a word in Greek for privacy" [p. 32].

Self-esteem is defined in Greece in terms of how one's prescribed obligations and loyalties are fulfilled. Social control in Western societies is to a large extent based on guilt mechanisms,

**Table 11-1** *Role Profiles from the American and Greek Cultures*  
*Rankings of Ways in Which Mothers Are Expected to Behave Toward*  
*Sons, and Foremen toward Laborers (after Triandis, Vassiliou, &*  
*Nassiakou, 1968)*

American expectations	Greek expectations
Mother's behavior toward son	
Stand up for	Help
Reward	Cooperate with
Love	Study with
Admire	Reward
Show concern for	Advise
Protect	Teach
Buy gift for	Admire
Praise	Be interested in
Go to movie with	Feel sympathetic toward
Cry for	Love
Wish good luck to	Enjoy
Share responsibility with	Not be enemy of
Foreman's behavior toward laborer	
Argue with	Reprimand
Disagree with	Scold
Command	Appoint
Not confess sins to	Exploit
Be annoyed by	Advise
Treat as a subordinate	Teach
Teach	Not ask for advice
Correct	Not thank for goods
Advise	Not ask for help
Reprimand	Not apologize
Look down upon	Not express gratitude to

whereby the individual takes on the values and behavior standards of his society and applies them to himself. This is possible only in cultures in which the individual has the freedom for self-determination. In the Greek culture, the individual does not have this freedom, and the penalty for wrongdoing is exposure and shame.

Pollis says that the reputation that Greeks have for nonconformity and individuality is actually a product of unbending loyalty to their

group and what it stands for. Compromise, which elsewhere is recognized as essential for the democratic process, is seen as a betrayal of group loyalties.

Culturally derived attitudes of this type help explain the perplexity reported by James Skinner (1966), an American psychiatrist who worked for a while in Greece. Skinner noted that Greek psychiatrists, even those who had been trained abroad, seemed to be unable to perceive blame-avoidance as pathological. For

example, when Greek patients told their psychiatrist that they did not feel responsible for interpersonal and other problems they were experiencing, an attitude that is typical among Greek men, he tended to accept it uncritically, even though his training had stressed the point that such problems could not be resolved until patients accepted some measure of personal responsibility. Both the psychiatrist and his patients believed it essential that the burden of personal guilt and responsibility must somehow be placed elsewhere. In a culture that is shame-oriented, rather than guilt-oriented however, such views are not unexpected.

This tendency to externalize events and their causes also appears in other forms. Skinner noted that Greeks tended to perceive interpersonal relations in ways that to him seemed grossly oversimplified. For example, if a Greek experienced difficulties in carrying out a plan or an activity, he tended to attribute his failure to the deliberate sabotage or interference of some person.

### *Perceiving the everyday world*

Wayne Dennis (1957) is the author of another comparative study that reflects differences in the way in which American and Arab children regard everyday objects. Dennis asked American, Lebanese, and Sudanese children to tell him "What is \_\_\_\_\_ for?" Some of Dennis' findings are reported in Table 11-2. The answers to this simple question not only showed differences in cultural attitudes, but also pointed to major differences in attitudes and values in the culture. Although children in all three cultural contexts tended to regard the *mouth* primarily as useful in eating, American children were more likely to mention its use in talking. This difference may reflect parental attitudes toward the participation of children in discussions. Traditional mores specify that "Children should be seen and not

heard." Inasmuch as Lebanese customs are more traditional than American, and Sudanese are more traditional than Lebanese, it is not too surprising that these differences in traditionalism should be reflected in children's beliefs that the mouth is for talking. The appearance of "drinking" in the Sudanese replies was attributed by Dennis to the fact that the hot climate requires greater consumption of water. The use of *hands* also reflects local customs and the degree to which a culture has been Westernized. In the Sudan, eating without the use of cutlery is more common than it is in Lebanon, where, in turn, it is more common than it is in the United States. Reactions to *father* and *mother* reflect differences in roles, Westernization, and perceptions. Note that the response "nursing" to *mother* appears only among the Sudanese.

*Boy* and *girl* also evoke differential reactions. Girls are more likely to be perceived as "working, helping parents, and this type of response is also more common in Arab countries. "Playing" is a response that seems to be characteristically American. Children in all cultures play, but the American childhood years are more play centered than most. Play is seen by Americans as very important for the proper development of children, and the child who does not or cannot play is viewed with some concern. *Dogs* and *cats* also figure in this play orientation. In America, they are included in many households to facilitate play experiences, whereas the Middle East household is more likely to include them for utilitarian purposes.

*Gold* also evokes a differential response, and one that is contrary to expectations based on common sense. One would expect that people in Lebanon and the Sudan, being less affluent than Americans, would be less likely to possess gold jewelry, yet the opposite is true. Most American women, even affluent ones, wear gold-colored "costume jewelry," whereas

**Table 11-2. Differences in Replies from American, Lebanese, and Sudanese Children to the Question "What Is \_\_\_\_\_ for?" (Dennis, 1957)**

Stimulus words and use—categories	Percentage of response frequencies		
	American	Lebanese	Sudanese
<b>Mouth</b>			
eating	61	74	71
talking	39	22	14
drinking	0	0	7
<b>Hands</b>			
eating	6	23	33
writing	11	10	16
working	12	12	12
playing	1	1	0
<b>Mother</b>			
providing food	16	51	7
providing care	62	44	41
nursing	0	0	19
<b>Father</b>			
working,			
earning money	5	76	10
buying food	1	16	7
providing care	17	6	16
assisting family	14	5	29
<b>Boy</b>			
going to school	16	5	7
working,			
helping parents	25	24	17
future reference	11	20	12
playing	24	9	0
<b>Girl</b>			
going to school	12	23	9
working,			
helping parents	28	45	24
future reference	12	11	0
playing	27	5	0
<b>Dogs</b>			
guarding, watching	16	66	12
barking, biting	9	19	0
hunting	4	8	7
pets, playing	49	4	3
<b>Cats</b>			
catching mice	16	63	53
meowing	6	13	2
pets, playing	52	6	7
<b>Gold</b>			
decorative	16	53	67
economic	61	26	2

women in the Mediterranean area, irrespective of their economic level, would feel humiliated at having to wear any jewelry that was an imitation of gold. There is, of course, an economic aspect to this, in that gold jewelry can be pawned and hence has a degree of built-in economic security. But even more important is the feeling that the wearing of imitation gold means that one's husband is cheap, unappreciative, and has no pride. The American child sees very little gold and hence is inclined to think of it in abstract (economic) terms, whereas in the Middle East a child's mother is likely to go about her household chores loaded down with real gold jewelry.

### *Reaction to catastrophe*

The way in which the members of different ethnic groups respond to danger also suggests clues as to perceptual styles. At 1:05 A.M., on May 23, 1960, a great tsunami or "tidal wave," caused by an earthquake off the coast of Chile, destroyed some 500 dwellings in the city of Hilo, Hawaii. Sixty-one persons lost their lives in the wreckage. A 20-minute warning blast on a siren was sounded more than 4 hours before the tsunami hit the city, but only 40% of the residents of the low-lying section of town evacuated the area. Ninety-five percent of the persons interviewed later admitted that they had heard the siren, and 94% of this group said they knew what it meant. The chief difference between those who left the area when the siren sounded and those who stayed turned out to be an ethnic one. As Table 11-3 shows, a majority of Filipinos, Japanese, and Portuguese did not leave, whereas a majority of Hawaiians did. The researchers suggested that the difference may have been due to the fact that Hawaiians have a rather elaborate mythology about the part Polynesian deities play in geophysical events and that such a belief facilitated adaptive reactions. In other words,

*Table 11-3. Percentage Differences in the Behavior of Members of Various Ethnic Groups in Hilo, Hawaii, on Hearing the Warning Siren in Advance of the Tidal Wave of May 23, 1960 (Lachman, Tatsuoka, & Bonk, 1961)*

Ethnic group	Behavior on hearing the warning siren	
	Left the area	Remained in the area
	Per- cent	Per- cent
Filipino	30	69
Japanese	31	69
Portuguese	7	93
Hawaiian	69	31

belief in the gods enabled the Hawaiians to be more realistic about the impending danger (Lachman, Tatsuoka, & Bonk, 1961). Whatever the reason, the results of the survey make it clear that the Hawaiians perceived the situation quite differently than other ethnic groups and suggest that the reason for this difference may be found in the values and attitudes of the cultures involved.

### *The culture as a perceptual filter*

There is another interesting implication in the findings of the Hilo study. The Hawaiians are perhaps the least Westernized of the ethnic groups represented in the survey, yet they were the most responsive to the warning signal. Other data picked up by the research team show that level of education was of negligible survival value: although persons with high school education were somewhat more likely to leave the area, college-educated persons were as likely to remain as were persons with only a grade school education. Clues as to the possible meaning of these data may be found

in the comments made by D. O. Hebb (1955b) as he reviewed some research conducted at McGill University dealing with reactions to isolation. The findings of these various studies are consistent with research we reviewed briefly in Chapter 2, namely, that exposure to stimulation, and particularly social stimulation, promotes general effectiveness, and isolation appears to prevent the development of effective responses to the environment. Stimulation is needed to keep the psyche functioning normally, Hebb concluded, but there is a limit to the amount of stimulation an organism can absorb and still function effectively. In contrast to what a child experiences, adults are exposed to more stimulation because they have to deal with a greater variety of complex situations, but the greater stimulation they have to cope with does not evoke a corresponding amount of reaction, as it would if they were children. Hebb asked himself how adults were able to avoid chronic states of arousal and concluded that man's culture acts like a "protective cocoon" that filters or screens out all stimuli except those that are directly meaningful or relevant to the matter at hand.

In other words, our culture "programs" us to perceive those stimuli that are consistent with the usual events in an orderly, civilized world. It does not prepare us personally to deal with catastrophes, like tidal waves. Some of the institutions of society, like the fire department or the Red Cross, may be prepared for catastrophes, but their operations are not a part of our everyday life style. It is possible, then, that a thoroughly acculturated person may simply "not get the message" when he is signaled that a catastrophe is imminent, because he cannot perceive how such a thing can happen to him.

To return to the Hilo study, it appears that the less sophisticated Hawaiians were able to respond in a more adaptive way to the imminent disaster than the more sophisticated Japanese. Interviews of those who did not

evacuate the danger area in advance of the tsunami show that they really did not think they were in danger. For example, they thought there might be another warning or that they were situated high enough to be safe. But if Hebb's analysis of the way in which we insulate ourselves against the perception of potentially distressing events is valid, such replies may be considered rationalizations. What we learn from our culture is how to perceive our environment, and if we are trying to attain a relatively calm and stable way of life, we are inclined to misperceive or overlook events and elements that possess a high potential for disturbance.

## *Core Values*

### *American core values*

One way to look at the kinds of perceptions we learn from our culture is to view them as being organized around core values, that is, certain values that have a kind of priority or precedence in determining other values and attitudes. "Fair play" may be considered to be a core value in Anglo-American cultures, because a whole complex of attitudes and values is dependent on it—willingness to abide by referees' decisions even when they are disliked, the use of a light line in game fishing, and so forth.

Walter Gruen (1964, 1966) has attempted a kind of chart of American core values (see Table 11-4), using results of a questionnaire composed of items that were found to be correlated with one another when the questionnaire was submitted to a sample of middle-class (MC) Americans. He found that working-class (WC) people agreed with the statements more than lower-middle-class (LMC) individuals, who, in turn, were more accepting of them than upper-middle-class (UMC) persons. People 50



*Table 11-4. American Core Values (after Gruen, 1966)*

- 
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vigorous pursuit of status change through upward social mobility.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Success defined in terms of upward mobility and change in role (as contrasted with maintenance of stable role development).</li> <li>1.2 Gratification of wishes postponed to the future (as contrasted with immediate satisfaction of wishes).</li> <li>1.3 Optimism about the possibility of success resulting from one's own efforts.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Positive value attached to external and superficial qualities.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Preference for extraversion as a basis for social interaction (e.g., many casual acquaintances, rather than a few close friends).</li> <li>2.2 Preference for superficial and stereotyped forms of expression (rather than unique, genuine, and more personalized kinds of self-expression).</li> <li>2.3 Positive valuing of youth and prettiness (as contrasted with a preference for qualities characterized by maturity, suspended judgment, and the "patina" of age).</li> <li>2.4 Lack of interest in reading and in books.</li> <li>2.5 Externalization of blame for one's fate (in contrast to internalization of blame—blaming oneself for one's problems).</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Standardization of behavior.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Insistence on conformity to community standards of behavior (as contrasted with a tolerance for individualistic or personalized standards).</li> <li>3.2 Preference for employment with stable, well known organizations (in contrast with self-employment).</li> <li>3.3 Endorsement of traditional morality.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Impulse control and restriction.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1 Tense, tight control of emotional expression (as opposed to free</li> </ol> </li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>relaxed, uninhibited expression of feelings).</li> <li>4.2 Preoccupation with schedules, regularity, and promptness (as contrasted with spontaneous and unstructured approach to daily routines).</li> <li>4.3 Extreme concern with cleanliness for its own sake (as contrasted with functional cleanliness).</li> <li>4.4 Preference for bland food, or food with little variety (in contrast to food of considerable variety, flavored with spices and sauces).</li> <li>4.5 Belief in romantic love (as opposed to love resulting from growth in mutual understanding and acceptance and the development of interests in common).</li> <li>4.6 Involvement in activity in order to avoid sensual experiences (as opposed to deliberate involvement in and enjoyment of sensual experiences).</li> <li>4.7 Emphasis on keeping busy (in contrast to the enjoyment of idle time and leisure for its own sake).</li> <li>4.8 Relaxation and recreation as health measures (rather than as enjoyable activities for their own sake).</li> <li>4.9 Faith in rationality (as contrasted with faith in intuition or in decisions that are based on or take cognizance of feelings and emotions).</li> <li>5. Cult of freedom.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1 Preference for small, autonomous families, without much personal involvement or interdependency (rather than close, interdependent ties with the extended family).</li> <li>5.2 Equality of birth (rather than limitations based on biological and social inheritance).</li> <li>5.3 Unlimited freedom for individuals (as against responsibility and commitment to others).</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |
|---|---|
-

years and older tended to agree with them more than people 40 years and younger. High scorers among college students tended to be more yielding, when tested in the Asch conformity situation we described earlier. High scorers also showed a greater degree of conventionality, in that they tended to prefer styles of dress, furniture, and cars that were preferred by a majority of students. High scorers preferred to read *Life*, *Look*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and the *Reader's Digest*, and tended to avoid magazines like *Esquire*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Saturday Review*, and the *New Yorker*. The questionnaire was also tested on samples of German MC adults, Australian university students, and Northern Irish UMC adults. Results from all three groups differed significantly from comparable American groups, thus suggesting that the statements actually do reflect American value patterns.

Earlier students of American values (e.g., Loeb, 1953) had reported that the LMC was most concerned with maintaining and affirming the key core values. However, Gruen's research suggests that concern for these values has shifted to the WC, and that the LMC, like the UMC, is becoming more pluralistic in the values it endorses. Some validity to this conclusion is lent by the fact that teachers told Gruen that they were somewhat inclined to encourage the development of counternorm values, whereas a generation ago teachers were considered to give a strong endorsement to the core culture.

There are two points that should be made before we leave this study. One is that the core values listed in Table 11-4 are somewhat inconsistent. There is forthright endorsement of individual liberty, for example, and equally forthright endorsement of conformity. Upward mobility creates changes and thrives in a changing, pluralistic social environment; this is incompatible with the traditionalism and longing for the security to be found in well-known, well-established organizations reflected in

other values. However, the values are more consistent than inconsistent and are to a large extent interrelated.

The other point is that there is an overlap between these core values and the values characteristic of other cultures. Cultures do not exist as isolates in time and space. There is a great deal of borrowing and exchange among cultures, and cultures may develop similar values quite independently of each other. Gruen found that Australian students endorsed upward mobility, just as American students did, but favored tighter emotional control. As contrasted with American subjects, Germans were more likely to reject values related to extraversion, conformity, bland food, and the avoidance of sensuality, but gave an even stronger endorsement of statements relating to emotional control, romantic love, and punctuality. The Northern Irish subjects agreed very strongly with questionnaire items in a given value cluster but also disagreed strongly with others in the same area, thus suggesting that a different set of interlocking core values characterized their culture.

### *German-American differences*

The question of similarities and differences between value systems was explored by McClelland and others (1958), who studied the responses of American and German adolescent males to TAT cards selected to evoke imagery related to needs for achievement (n Ach) and affiliation (n Aff). The American boys had more n Ach than their German counterparts, but there was no statistically significant difference in the n Aff scores of the two groups. There were, however, a number of qualitative differences in the way the two groups regarded their obligations to themselves and to society. The differences, revealed partly by the TAT stories and partly by a questionnaire administered in connection with the study, are summarized

briefly in Table 11-5. Both American and German boys were inclined to endorse the idea of investing time and energy in accomplishing something, but for American boys the "something" was more likely to be related to their personal plans for self-development, whereas for the Germans the "something" was more likely to be related to their obligations to others. This does not mean that the Americans are unconcerned about others. As our previous discussions would indicate, the peer group plays a vital part in the lives of Americans, and particularly in the lives of adolescents. Hence, it is no surprise to learn that the typical American youth in this study reported involve-

ment in about five different group activities, whereas the typical German reported only one. The German is more concerned with the "idea" or the ideals of the group—the group in general, whereas the American tends to be interested in his interaction and social success with individuals in groups. The German student feels under strong obligation to the one or two groups in which he holds membership, whereas the American student is more broadly concerned, although concerned in a more limited way, with the several groups in which he holds membership. Americans are more likely to join groups in order to accomplish a particular purpose—to socialize, go swimming or hiking, carry out a particular task that is best done in a group context, and the like. The German, on the other hand, is looking for a place to invest his loyalty. Americans decide quickly and easily whether they want to join a group; for a German, this decision comes only after a considerable degree of soul searching. Whereas the American is more likely to take his recreation in group context, the German is more inclined to find modes of recreation (stamp collection, reading, hiking) that can be done alone.

*Table 11-5 Differences in the Ways American and German Youths Perceive their Obligations to Themselves and to Society (McClelland, Sturr, Knapp, & Wendt, 1958)*

Obligation to self	
United States	High motivation to achieve (n Ach), coupled with an emphasis on individual accomplishment and self-development
Germany	High degree of "rational striving" (get the job done), greater emphasis on self-denial and self-restraint, greater participation in individualistic activities
Obligation to society	
United States	Active participation in a wide range of group activities, coupled with a greater sensitivity to the opinions and feelings of others
Germany	Greater concern over obligations to an idealistic code of decency (governing interpersonal behavior)

### *Bringing about changes in values*

One question that often comes up when Americans discuss cultural values is: Can values be changed? This question has been raised with respect to both Japan and Germany, particularly with regard to the kinds of values underlying the behavior of their respective populations before and during World War II. Such problems are not readily amenable to social research, but some questionnaire studies, like the one just cited, shed some light on the structural aspects of the attitudes and values under consideration. The question has particularly interesting implications with respect to Japan, inasmuch as there has been a marked

change in the formal aspects of government since the war. The question might be phrased: Has the introduction of democratic governmental forms in Japan had any effect on the attitudes and values of the Japanese people?

F. Kenneth Berrien (1965) has found that there is still a considerable degree of deference on the part of Japanese people in their interaction with people of higher status. For example, 54% of Japanese blue-collar workers said that they would give up their seat if their immediate superior entered a crowded bus on which they were riding, whereas only 37% of American blue-collar workers said they would offer their seat, since the fair rule is "First come, first served." When asked what they thought of their work, most Japanese employees maintained that it was a part of life comparable in importance to their life off the job, whereas most American workers were inclined to assign their work to a more subordinate place in their lives.

Berrien (1966) also administered the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS), a questionnaire designed to measure the strength of fifteen psychological needs. American male students tended to score higher on needs for deference, achievement, affiliation, and dominance, whereas Japanese male students tended to score higher on needs for abasement, change, and endurance. American female students tended to score higher on needs for deference, achievement, affiliation, dominance, and nurturance, whereas Japanese female students tended to score higher on a need for endurance. In analyzing the scores for Japanese men, Berrien concluded that, except for the unexpectedly lower scores on deference, the values reflected in the scores seemed to conform with the stereotype of the Japanese people, as revealed by their cultural and political history. The pattern of self-abasement, a reluctance to accept responsibility for leadership, a capacity for hard work, and a generally

lower level of personal aspiration seemed to him to indicate that there had been not much change in these Japanese values since the period before World War II. He did note, however, that the low need for deference and the high need for change were both in marked contrast to the general direction of the values. He interpreted the EPPS scores for Japanese women students as indicating a desire to avoid becoming personally involved with others, and to maintain a high degree of insulation from community affairs.

After reviewing his own and other research, Berrien concluded that there was cause for both optimism and pessimism with respect to the growth of democratic values in Japan during the last twenty years. On the one hand, he noted the strong needs for self-abasement, and unwillingness to assume leadership, and the tendency to isolate oneself from the community that we have noted earlier. On the positive side, he noted that Japanese students appear to be more concerned than American students about censorship, freedom of speech, and fair-employment practices. In these respects, the Japanese appeared to be more liberal than Americans. He felt that more data were needed, however, before one could decide whether these tendencies were indicative of a basic trend toward democratic attitudes and values or whether they were merely a temporary phase in Japanese thinking. In any event, Berrien questioned whether Japanese political and governmental operations, although outwardly democratic, were having any fundamental effect on attitudes and values of the Japanese people.

This gap between surface and subsurface aspects of behavior was explored by Stanley C. Flog (1963), who noted that there are many indications of cross-cultural exchanges between the United States and Germany. Americans drive Volkswagens, Porsches, and Mercedes, use German precision cameras, and consume

large quantities of German beer. Germans, for their part, consume large quantities of Coca-Cola, shop at American-style supermarkets, and are very fond of American films. He found no evidence, however, that American and German personality trends were merging. He found that Germans and Americans were essentially much as Kurt Lewin (1935) described them over a generation ago: Germans are stiff, formal, and self-inhibited with all but a few of their very close, intimate friends, whereas Americans tend to be affable, relaxed, and socially at ease even with strangers. Plog also found that Americans are much more willing than Germans to communicate information about themselves to a wide range of people, both strangers and intimates.

The extremely low level of leadership displayed by German women, as indicated in Figure 9-3, also suggests that there has been little change in their status in the years following World War II (Almond & Verba, 1963).

### *Acculturation and n Ach*

Although Berrien's research suggests that the learning of some Western modes of behavior has been impeded in Japan by the hold of more traditional values, other research indicates that such values may aid the Japanese in other respects. Edward Norbeck and George DeVos (1961) have reviewed studies relating to the adaptation of Japanese to American ways. The question has been asked why Japanese immigrants and their descendants have so readily adopted American attitudes and values, especially the motive to achieve, whereas other minority groups, some of them targets of less social discrimination, have resisted acculturation.

The success of the Japanese-Americans can apparently be explained, at least in part, by the fact that Japanese values of perseverance in pursuit of long-term goals, self-denial, obedi-

ence to authority, and a sense of obligation to parents are consistent with and reinforce American values that stress achievement and working for future goals. The drive to achieve is intensified by the desire of Japanese-Americans to honor their parents and to satisfy their obligations toward them by fulfilling the occupational goals that the latter have encouraged them to set.

These conclusions are supported to some degree by the finding that descendants of Japanese who settled in cultures which do not emphasize achievement values (e.g., Peru) show less achievement motivation than do Japanese-Americans.

### *Summary*

A culture consists of systems of values, beliefs, norms, artifacts, and symbols that have been developed by a society and that are shared by its members. Such systems exert a profound influence on the personality of the individual. Investigations carried on in the contexts of different cultures are necessary procedures for testing the validity of social psychological principles.

The learning of appropriate patterns of behavior begins during infancy, with the parents serving as agents of the culture. This learning takes place as much by the way in which parents behave toward children as in what they tell them. An example is given of the differences in the interaction between American children and their parents in public parks and that of French children and their parents; American children are allowed a great deal more freedom to play in the dirt and to interact with other children than French children are. American children are thus learning about a world that should be explored and investigated independently, whereas French children are learning about a world that is potentially dangerous, but

which is in the charge of powerful, omniscient individuals, who have imposed a certain structure that should not be challenged or investigated. These two differences in world view lead to children's behavior that Americans see as normal, but that Europeans see as undisciplined. These values also appear in adult life, with French businessmen being more concerned than Americans with maintaining the status quo. In contrast to Russian children, American children are more peer-oriented and less adult-oriented. In contrast to Mexican children, Anglo-American children appear to be more selfish and aggressive, continuing to compete long after they have anything to gain personally from such activity. By way of contrast, Mexican children appear passive and unwilling to stand up for their rights, even when they have nothing to lose by doing so.

These patterns appear to be related to adult behavior, in that Americans are perceived as somewhat forceful and independent, as contrasted with Japanese, Chinese, and Filipinos. On the other hand, they are also seen as more generous and cooperative, thus suggesting that early patterns of selfishness come under some normative control. French children, too, grow up to be quite independent and relatively free of peer-group influence. The effect of cultural attitudes toward independence and the peer group can be measured by Asch-type situations involving false norms. Norwegians and West African Temne appear to be more susceptible to social pressure, and French, Eskimos, and Scottish, less so. In contrast to the French, Americans appear to have stronger affiliation needs, while Swedes have weaker ones, thus confirming stereotypes of the respective cultures.

In comparison to other Western cultures, Greeks appear to define roles and interpersonal relations differently. An individual is thought to derive his selfhood from his own group. This interpretation is coupled with social control through shame, rather than guilt, and a tendency to externalize the causes of one's behavior.

The frames of reference provided by different cultures lead to differences in the way events of all types are perceived, irrespective of whether the event is an interpersonal encounter, a household object, or even an impending disaster. The culture acts as a kind of filter that screens out stimuli that contradict or might disturb the individual's view of his environment. The way in which the environment is perceived is to a large extent determined by the core values prescribed by the culture. A study of American middle-class core values shows that they now are endorsed most strongly by working-class members and that middle-class people have shifted to more pluralistic sets of values.

Studies of differences between American and German values show that American boys scored higher in achievement motivation ( $n$  Ach), but there were no differences in affiliation need ( $n$  Aff) between the two groups. American boys are more involved with their peer groups, whereas German boys prefer individualistic activities. A study of Japanese values shows that changes take place slowly and that deference and self-abasement are still important cultural traits. On the other hand, the core values of the Japanese culture appeared to facilitate the progress and acculturation of Japanese emigrants in countries where achievement is considered highly desirable.



*Dorka Raynor/  
Nancy Palmer  
•Photo Agency*

## Chapter 12

### Social Perception

At a number of points so far, we have discussed the effect that various social variables have on the way individuals perceive themselves, their behavior, and the stimuli in their environment. Social position is a case in point. A district attorney will perceive marijuana use quite differently than a social dropout will. Different positions occupied by the same individual will also change his perceptions. A district attorney, whose role prescription requires him to prosecute marijuana users, is bound to look on its use quite differently when he discovers his sixteen-year-old daughter using it. Whether this discovery will affect his attitudes and behavior in his official role is a matter of personal style, but the point is that the two different positions and sets of roles affect



attitudes in different ways. Similarly, the social dropout who is a heavy marijuana user and has almost a missionary zeal where it is concerned, may look on it differently when he discovers that his eight-year-old sister has been experimenting with it.

Cultural identities also affect perception, as we have noted in the previous chapter. Greeks look on foremen differently than Americans do, and Sudanese children see fathers differently than Lebanese or Americans do. These differing perceptions lead to different expectations, which, in turn, generate different behavior toward the person occupying the position in question.

In Chapter 10, when we discussed self-theory, we noted that each of us segregates a part of our phenomenal or perceived environment as pertaining especially to us. Combs and Snygg (1959) called this our *perceived self* and described it also as an area of experience that has as its center our self-concept. We perceive objects within the area designated as our perceived self as being quite different from those elsewhere in our phenomenal environment. For instance, when Navaho children were asked whether it was possible to change the rules of games, their replies were qualified in terms of whether the games were Navaho or white. As Table 12-1 shows, changing the rules

of Navaho games was seen by them as virtually impossible, whereas three-fourths of the group sampled believed that the rules of white people's games could be changed (Havighurst & Neugarten, 1955).

Any situation that makes us more conscious of ourselves is likely to affect our perception of events and objects that are seen as related to our identities. Asking Navaho children to comment on the possibility of changing game rules is an example of that principle. They were relatively relaxed when the possibility of changing white people's games was under discussion, but much more aroused and defensive when it was a matter of changing the rules of Navaho games. The reason, of course, was that they felt identified with the Navaho games—the games were a part of the perceived self. In other terms, there was a degree of self-awareness when Navaho games were being discussed that was not present when white people's games were concerned.

## *Evaluation Effects*

### *On being evaluated*

A somewhat similar phenomenon occurs when individuals are being evaluated. In one type of classroom 'encounter game,' students sit in a circle and are given cards each bearing a single word. Each student reads his words aloud when his turn comes. Later, when students are asked what words they can remember, they usually remember almost all the words they have uttered but relatively few of the words spoken by others. When we utter even isolated words before an audience, we are well aware that our performance is being evaluated. Evaluation carries with it the implication of failure and not coming across very well, or even excitement at the possibility of making a good impression.

**Table 12-1.** *Answers of Navaho Children and Adolescents to the Question Can Game Rules Be Changed?*  
(after Havighurst & Neugarten, 1955)

	Navaho games	White games
Answers		
Yes	3%	74%
No	97%	26%

The readiness with which one's own word cards are recalled can be, therefore, accounted for in terms of arousal effects: one is more tense, more alert, and so forth. It can also be explained in terms of perception: the word we utter before a group becomes *our* word and quite different from the other words that were uttered. We have suffered a little anxiety for it, or at least worked a little for it, and hence have become invested in it. But whatever the source of our arousal, it was undoubtedly evaluation that produced it.

Another possibility, of course, is that the mere presence of others produces the arousal that enhances our performance in remembering "our" word. This possibility was investigated by Paul B. Paulus and Petter Murdoch (1971), who had subjects learn nonsense words. The subjects were either told or not told that they would be tested on them before an audience. Results showed that they learned the words more successfully when they anticipated the evaluation of an audience than when not. In actuality, it did not matter, when testing time came, whether there was an audience or not. What counted was the anticipated evaluation, rather than arousal due to the presence of others.

Much depends on who is going to evaluate us. This point was demonstrated by an experiment with black boys aged 7 to 10 from low-income neighborhoods in a large Northern city. The boys were instructed in a paired-associate learning task by either a black or a white experimenter. Results showed that learning proceeded most successfully when the experimenter was black. For both instructors, praise was better than criticism in getting results, but boys who had a particularly high need for approval learned better when the black experimenter criticized them than they did when the white experimenter praised them (Katz, Henchy, & Allen 1968).

### *Evaluating others*

We are likely to have a favorable opinion of others when they are able and competent, behave in pleasant and agreeable ways, indicate that they like us, are similar to us, and so forth. This tendency not only is consistent with common sense, but also has found support in research studies, as Elliot Aronson (1970) has noted. Aronson also makes the point that these outcomes can also be explained psychologically in terms of a general reward-cost or exchange type of theory, that is, we like people who provide us with maximum gratification at minimum expense, or, put into other words, we like people whose overall behavior is most rewarding to us. People who are able and competent, for example, are potentially the best sources of help (and less likely to need help than incompetent people).

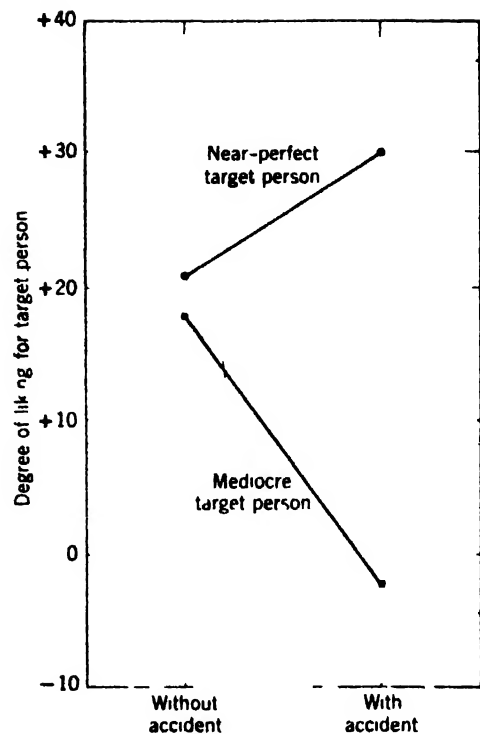
Aronson goes on to say that although matters work out this way most of the time, there are instances in which the expected relationship between others' competence and our liking for them does not emerge. An example is to be found in research with discussion groups, in which participants with the best ideas are often *not* the best-liked members (Slater, 1955). What may be operating here is a kind of curvilinear relationship between ability and attractiveness, in that while some degree of competence makes an individual attractive, higher levels make target persons look *too good*—unapproachable, or perhaps nonhuman. His superiority may, furthermore, make the observer feel inferior.

In support of this idea, Aronson notes that President Kennedy's popularity *increased* after the Bay of Pigs incident—the abortive and embarrassing invasion of Cuba in 1961. This increase in attractiveness could have been due to the fact that evidence of his fallibility made him more likable, but it also could have been

due to any number of other causes, as, for instance, the frank and open manner with which he accepted complete responsibility for the blunder.

The real world, Aronson observed, is no place to test a hypothesis of this type, hence, an experiment was planned in which subjects listened to a tape recording of a presentation by one of four persons: (a) a near-perfect individual, (b) a near-perfect individual who has a clumsy accident, (c) a mediocre person, and (d) a mediocre person who has a clumsy accident. The recordings all consisted of an interview in which the target person attempted to answer a set of very difficult questions and then told something about his college background. The near-perfect individual answered 92% of the questions correctly and indicated that he had an excellent record in high school and college. The same actor played the part of the mediocre person. He answered only 30% of the questions correctly and said that his record in high school and at college was only average. Those subjects who listened to presentation No. 2 or No. 4 heard the target person end the interview with a good deal of noise and clatter, exclaiming, "Oh my goodness, I've spilled coffee all over my new suit!" The subjects were then asked to rate the target person in terms of the impression he made on them, the extent to which they liked him, and the like. As the results reported in Figure 12-1 indicate, the near-perfect target person, as hypothesized, was rated higher than the mediocre one, but all the more so when he suffered the clumsy accident. The mediocre person who suffered the accident, however, evoked a considerable degree of rejection, as the lower graph line in Figure 12-1 shows (Aronson, Willerman, & Floyd, 1966).

In another experiment, Aronson and Linder (1965) arranged for female subjects to overhear themselves being evaluated by a person they



**Figure 12-1.** Differences in the rated attractiveness of a near-perfect and a mediocre target person who either did or did not have an awkward accident at the end of his taped interview. (Aronson, Willerman, & Floyd 1966)

thought was another subject, but who was actually a confederate of the experimenters. Some subjects heard positive evaluations, while some heard negative ones. The overheard conversations consisted of a series of seven brief interviews, hence, it was possible for some of the subjects to hear negative evaluations of themselves that gradually became more positive, while some heard positive reactions that gradually became negative. When subjects were asked to say how much they liked the evaluator, the most favorable ratings came from those who had first heard negative comments that later became positive. As Figure 12-2 indicates,

evaluators in this condition were rated even higher than those whose comments about the subject were uniformly positive. On the other hand, those evaluators whose comments were initially positive, but became negative, were disliked more than those whose comments were uniformly negative.

Aronson (1970) interpreted this experiment in reward-cost terms. As expected, the positive evaluator was liked better than the negative one, but the evaluator who began negative and became positive was even more attractive because her behavior helped to reduce the subject's state of anxiety and tension at hearing a negative evaluation of herself. Conversely, the evaluator who began positive but became negative got the lowest rating because she evoked more anxiety on the part of the listener. As

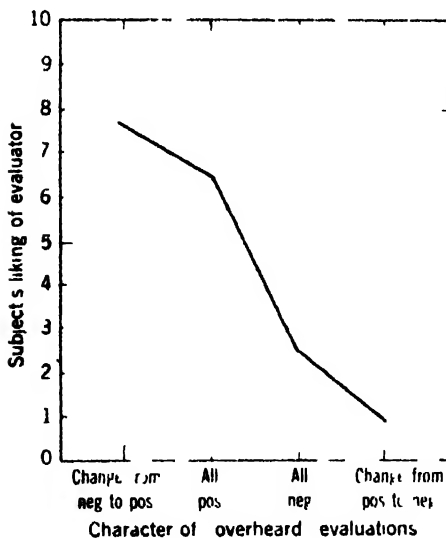
the subject heard the all negative critique, she was embarrassed and tense, but she came to expect it as the sessions continued, whereas the evaluator who worsened her comments introduced unexpected elements and heightened the subject's tension.

### *Self-fulfilling prophecies*

One interesting outcome of our false perceptions of others is our tendency to behave toward them in such a way as to make them valid. The classic study of this effect is the field experiment conducted by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968), in which elementary teachers were told that tests showed that certain of their students had the potentiality of being late bloomers, academically speaking, and that with a little encouragement, they would bloom. In actuality, of course, there were no such tests and the students had been selected at random. A year later, intelligence test scores showed that the late bloomers had made gains that were significantly greater than those of the rest of the children, the differences being most marked in the first and second grades. The investigators attributed the change in IQ to the teachers' having communicated their more favorable expectations to the late bloomers.

Attempts to replicate what has become known as the Rosenthal effect have had mixed results, but with enough success to suggest that there may be something to it. Jere E. Brophy and Thomas L. Good (1970) found that teachers tend to behave differently toward children they had identified as high achievers, in that they were more likely to rephrase questions directed at this group of children, to give more hints, and to reinforce correct answers with praise and commendation. Thus they facilitated the fulfillment of their prophecy for these children.

In another study, female students enrolled



**Figure 12-2.** *Subjects ratings of an evaluator whose overheard comments about them were initially negative and then became positive, entirely positive, or entirely negative, or were initially positive and then became negative (Aronson & Linder, 1965)*

in a child development course in university did some volunteer teaching of sixth and seventh graders as part of a term project. Each of these teachers received a seating chart for the class she was to teach and an indication as to whether a given child was from the school's program for the intellectually "gifted" or was in a "regular-track" group. The designations were, of course, fictitious and had been randomly assigned. Results showed that the "gifted" students were called upon more and praised more than the "nongifted" (Rubovits & Maehr, 1971).

While these two studies do not provide substantive evidence for the "Rosenthal effect," they do show that we tend to react toward another in accordance with the information we have concerning him. It seems logical that favorable treatment should evoke favorable reactions on his part, thus confirming our expectations, even though the information we initially received had no basis in fact.

### **Prejudice**

The kind of behavior that is involved in the self-fulfilling prophecy is characterized, of course, by bias or prejudice. The teachers who were led to believe that certain students were "gifted" or "late bloomers" were biased or prejudiced in a favorable direction, just as they were biased in an unfavorable direction with respect to students who had not been so designated. Although "bias" and "prejudice" can have positive or negative meanings, depending on the way a target person is perceived, it has become customary to use these words principally in a negative way, inasmuch as negative bias or prejudice has damaging effects not only on interpersonal relations, but particularly on the target person's self-esteem.

This point was demonstrated in some research by Ralph Epstein and S. S. Komorita (1966), who asked black children to look at

some slides that depicted children who were described as "Piraneans," a fictitious ethnic designation. Half the children were shown slides of white children; the other half were shown black children. The subjects were then given a *social distance* questionnaire to measure their attitudes toward the fictitious group, a questionnaire that asked whether they would want to marry a Piranean when they grew up, whether they would want a Piranean to visit their country, and the like. Results showed that the children were more favorably disposed to the white than to the black Piraneans.

Epstein and Komorita interpreted their findings as indicating that black children learn self-rejecting attitudes that mirror the prevailing prejudices of the white majority. The attitudes were apparently learned from their parents, as indicated by a subsequent survey, in which the children were asked how their parents would react to the Piraneans.

The Epstein-Komorita experiment was undertaken a decade or so ago and its results may be less valid today. As we indicated earlier, investigations of doll-choices among black children show that they are becoming more accepting of their racial identity than they were in former years. The principles illustrated by the study are still valid, nevertheless, in that they illustrate the effects of the negative and denigrating attitudes of the majority group and also suggest that minority children pick up such attitudes from their parents.

Another change in the social climate has come with the attempts of the dominant majority (at least the educated, middle-class sector) to moderate its attitudes (Cook, 1970). Some of this has come through greater association with black individuals on an equal-status basis. Stewart W. Cook (1970) tells of an elaborate experiment in which prejudiced white subjects participated with black and white partners on an equal-status basis in paid part-time employment. This resulted in marked attitude changes

for about one-third of the subjects. The factor that seemed to differentiate between the changers and the nonchangers was the presence or absence of generally positive attitudes toward others. The nonchangers expressed more cynicism and lower self-esteem. The point is, however, that some changes did result from the relatively brief contact, and it is reasonable to expect that more extensive changes would occur in a real-life situation, in which anti-prejudice norms were more clearly enunciated.

Antiprejudice norms occasionally have some ironic effects. In Chapter 9 we described an experiment in which homogeneous or mixed-sex pairs of college students were put into a situation in which one had to be the supervisor and the other the subordinate. Results showed that students scoring high on the Dominance Scale of the California Psychological Inventory tended to take over the supervisor's position, and the low scorers tended to become the subordinates. This effect was not produced in mixed-sex treatments, in which high-dominant females tended to subordinate themselves to low-dominant males (Megargee, 1969). A similar version of this experiment was conducted with female black and white students at the University of Texas. In all-black or all-white groups, the expected relationship between dominance and roles emerged, but when high-dominant white subjects were paired with low-dominant black subjects, an interesting reversal took place, with only a third of the white subjects assuming leadership, the other two-thirds abdicating to the black subjects. In most of the paired situations, a typical interaction was for the two women to look quizzically at each other, whereupon the low-dominant woman would say, "You be the leader." In the high-dominant-white, low-dominant-black situation, however, most of the white subjects deferred the decision to their black partner. The investigators concluded that it was more important for the high-dominant

white women to demonstrate their egalitarian attitudes in this situation than it was for them to play their usual dominant roles (Fenelon & Megargee, 1971). The fact that the experiment was set in a university context may have had much to do with this "enlightened" outcome, however. When a similar set of experiments was conducted in a high school in which 60% of the student body was Mexican-American, 25% black, and 15% Anglo-American, the more usual relationship between dominance scores and role selection appeared. In that context, high-dominant white participants evidently felt no compulsion to yield to low-dominant minority members (Rubinroit, 1970).

## Stereotypes

Prejudiced attitudes toward any group are often justified and reinforced by *stereotypes*, that is, generalized and value-laden impressions that people of one group use to characterize those of another. The term was originally used by Walter Lippmann (1922) in a pejorative sense to apply to attitude constructs that are factually incorrect, the result of illogical reasoning, and rigidly inflexible. Psychologists have used the term in this sense as well, especially in research investigating the nature and origin of ethnic prejudice.

The danger of using the term in a purely negative sense, however, obscures the nature of the various mechanisms involved. In recent years, psychologists have come to realize that intergroup relations of any type cannot be carried on unless members make use of some kind of frame of reference—a stereotype, if you like—in dealing with members of other groups. Not to do so would be to assume that all ethnic groups have the same attitudes, values, aspirations, percepts, and the like, an assumption that is as naive as that of assuming that members of any given ethnic group are completely differ-



*"DAD! Oh, I'm sorry, Sir. I thought you were my father. You all look alike, you know!"*

*Stereotype  
(John L. Rutter  
© 1971 Saturday  
Review Inc.)*

ent from other groups. Used in this sense, the term "stereotype" applies to any agreed-upon impression that members of one group have about members of other groups.

Not all psychologists have gone along with this "neutralization" of the term. John C. Brigham (1971) has maintained that the term should be used only to refer to generalizations about ethnic groups that are considered to be unjustified by an observer. The definition is, unfortunately, too inclusive: any generalization about any group can be faulted by some observer or other if only on the grounds that any generalization and hence any stereotype ignores, deliberately or otherwise, the infinite variations among and within the behavior of members of any group. Stereotypes, negative or positive, are only approximations and as such do not tell us the whole truth about any group or any individual. Why do we use them, if they are so patently inaccurate?

The fact is, stereotypes are indispensable in almost any kind of social interaction. It is

impossible to know everything about everybody. A stereotype is a kind of shortcut, a way of abstracting a number of characteristics about another person or group of persons, organizing them into a pattern of expectations, and responding to the person or persons as though they were that pattern. It would be impossible to interact with or respond effectively to other people if we did not refer to stereotypes. When stereotypes are constructed realistically, they are based on what we have learned about how people behave in terms of their social positions, roles, classes, and so forth. When we use the telephone to call someone in a distant city, our stereotype of telephone operators tells us what to expect of them. Our stereotype in this instance is a fairly accurate guide, because a telephone operator's roles are highly structured and there is little variation in the way that different women play them. If we were to encounter a telephone operator off the job, however, we would have to resort to different stereotypes to determine what to expect of her.

We would make some rapid judgments based on her manner of speech, the way she is dressed, the kind of person she is with, and what she happens to be doing at the moment. If she is in informal dress, wheeling a small child in a stroller, and shopping in a supermarket, we would call into operation the stereotypes we happen to have for mothers of young children.

### *When stereotypes mislead*

Stereotypes interfere with our ability to function effectively with others when they lead us to make assumptions inconsistent with the kind of behavior usually exhibited by the target person. A student's stereotype of professors might include the assumption that they are not interested in talking to students. If the same student is also having difficulty in a course, he does not, therefore, regard the professor as a potential source of help, whereas, in fact, the professor might be quite willing to talk to the student and help clarify his problems. The student might be so convinced of the validity of his stereotype that he actually acts in ways that cause the professor to "prove" he is not interested in students. The student might, for example, approach the professor after class and say: "I am getting concerned about my grade in this course." This rather feeble remark is hardly the type that would awaken a sympathetic interest on the part of a professor. The professor looks up the grade, notes that it is about a "D" and replies, "Well, I think you *should* be concerned." The student waits for the professor to say, "Would you like to come in to my office to talk about it?", but the professor is waiting for the student to make the next move. Nothing further transpires, and they both go their separate ways, the student even further convinced of the validity of his assumption that professors are not interested in students.

This type of maneuver, as we have noted, is a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy. In addition, it is a psychological defense against getting to know and understand others. Anxiety is an important factor in such instances. We commonly feel some degree of anxiety about interacting with people in positions of authority who are sitting in judgment on us, and we are also inclined to react defensively when anxious. The student finds it slightly reassuring that his stereotype of professors is correct. If he had been wrong, then he would have had to readjust his cognitive system in order to accommodate new information about professors. Some students could incorporate such data without much difficulty, but others would be troubled by the realization that they could reduce the social distance between themselves and professors and might even come to find them likable and helpful people. The insecure student prefers to maintain a considerable degree of social distance and not become involved with professors any more than is required. Thus anxiety serves to reinforce and sustain the stereotype and keeps the student from having to make any more adjustments (or accomplish any more learning) than he wishes. Unwittingly, of course, he contributes to a stereotype favored by professors, namely, that students really are not interested in learning—just in grades.

Donald T. Campbell (1967) reviewed evidence from anthropological and learning-theory studies and concluded that

... if there are group differences or differentials in social interaction, these will tend to appear in the stereotypes groups have of each other. Such stimulus components in stereotypes, are only part of the determinants, and perceptual and behavioral theory also makes it clear that stereotypes are concomitantly projections of the motives and concerns of the stereotype holder. The most



ubiquitous fallacious aspect of stereotypes is not so much the falsity of the descriptive content as it is in the several causal misperceptions that accompany them. Remedial efforts focused on denying group differences are apt to be unwittingly endorsing the most mischievous of these causal misperceptions—wrongly agreeing that the particular group differences cause the hostility, unwittingly agreeing that were the actual group differences to exist, discrimination would be justified [p. 827].

### *Cross-cultural studies of stereotypes*

The obvious cure for distortion in stereotypes is exposure to the "real" behavior of the target person, but exactly what that reality may be is not clear. One approach would be to compare the stereotypes that several ethnic groups hold for a given target group. Research shows that there tends to be a significant agreement among such views (Brigham, 1971). Often such agreement can be supported experimentally. In the foregoing chapter, for example, we showed how research findings generally support the prevailing idea that French people tend to be more individualistic and less conforming than other ethnic groups.

This may work well in the instance reported, but what about instances in which no experimental or correlational data are available and in which members of the target group deny the accuracy of the stereotype? Should not a certain degree of validity be accorded an ethnic group's own image of itself? The argument here goes: Who should be better acquainted with us than we ourselves?

There obviously is a built-in bias to such self-evaluation, but this does not mean that such impressions should not be studied along with perceptual data from other ethnic groups. Indeed, it may well be that a comparison between the self-stereotype and those held by

others may show wherein each stereotype is valid and suggest points at which it may be invalid. In any event, such comparisons are likely to be helpful in understanding the group in question, as well as the way in which others evaluate it.

One of the most extensive comparative studies of such stereotypes is one conducted by Harry C. Triandis and Vasso Vassiliou (1967) of the impressions Americans and Greeks have of themselves and each other. Triandis and Vassiliou termed the stereotypes that each respondent had of his own group *autostereotypes*, while the stereotypes he had of other groups were termed *heterostereotypes* (the Greek root *auto* means "self," and the root *hetero* means "other"). The groups studied included Americans and Greeks living in Greece. Respondents were asked to rate American and Greek tendencies on 41 characteristics. Table 12-2 lists 19 of the traits on which there was a majority agreement in each of the two groups of respondents. The idea that interethnic comparisons of stereotypes can shed some light on the "truth" that underlies them is supported by the fact that both groups agree on 11 of the Greek traits and 14 of the American traits. Where there is disagreement between the two, it is, as one might expect, a case of a group rejecting a negative stereotype or accepting a positive one. Americans, for example, see Greeks as arrogant, but Greeks do not, whereas Greeks see Americans as arrogant, but Americans do not. A partial exception is on the last trait in Table 12-2, in which Greeks see Americans as giving precise information, but Americans do not see themselves in this way.

Triandis and Vassiliou hypothesized that the greater the contact between ethnic groups, the more favorable their opinion of the other group. This hypothesis was only partly confirmed. When the responses of the Americans we have mentioned were compared with those

**Table 12-2.** *Agreement and Disagreement in Greeks' and Americans' Stereotypes about Themselves and Each Other (after Triandis and Vassiliou, 1967)*

Trait <sup>a</sup>	Greeks are:		Americans are:	
	According to Greeks	According to Americans	According to Greeks	According to Americans
Systematic	N <sup>b</sup>	N <sup>b</sup>	Y <sup>b</sup>	Y <sup>b</sup>
Efficient	Y	N	Y	Y
Rude in public manners	Y	Y	N	N
Suspicious	Y	Y	Y	N
Sly (not naive)	Y	Y	N	N
Follow procedures exactly	N	N	Y	Y
Proud	Y	Y	Y	Y
Obliging	Y	N	N	Y
Decisive in making plans	Y	N	Y	Y
Witty	Y	Y	N	N
"Empire builders"	Y	Y	Y	Y
Emotionally controlled	N	N	Y	Y
Practical	Y	N	Y	Y
Arrogant	N	Y	Y	N
Drive carefully	N	N	Y	Y
Lakadaisical	N	Y	N	N
Resist changes in working conditions	Y	Y	N	N
Give precise information	Y	N	Y	N

<sup>a</sup>Traits listed are those for which there was a clear majority in *each* group of judges

<sup>b</sup>Y = Agreement; N = disagreement

of Americans attending the University of Illinois, who had no contact with Greeks, the latter had more favorable stereotypes of Greeks than the former. On the other hand, Greek students at the University of Illinois had more favorable stereotypes of Americans than did Greeks living in Greece. The groups were not comparable, however. Most of the Americans living in Greece could not speak Greek and, as a consequence, were unable to participate in the Greek culture to any significant extent, whereas the Greek students at the University of Illinois were all fluent in English and were deeply involved in culture contact with Americans. It, therefore, appears that mere contact is not as important as the *quality*

of the contact. Part of the difficulty also lies in the fact that Americans in Greece are for the most part in superordinate positions over Greeks, and their higher status may have given them a considerable degree of bias in their views of Greeks. The idea that maximum contact provides a corrective to stereotypes is shown by the fact that those Americans who had taken the trouble to speak Greek had more favorable stereotypes of Greeks than those whose Greek was limited or nil.

Another comparative study of interethnic stereotypes was conducted by Mario Abate and F. K. Berrien (1967), who used psychological need descriptions from the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) as a basis for eliciting

ing judgments as to the autostereotypes and heterostereotypes of American and Japanese university students. In addition, the EPPS itself was administered to students in both countries. The ethnic image that emerged from EPPS scores was termed by the investigators a *vereotype*, i.e., a "true stereotype," of the personality and behavior being measured. Although the validity of EPPS "needs" scores as indices

to social behavior can be questioned (Brigham, 1971), their use in the Abate-Berrien study nevertheless adds an interesting dimension. In reporting the results of their study, the investigators ranked the needs in terms of their salience or strength for the respondents. A number of interesting relationships emerge, some of which are revealed by Table 12-3. In this table we have summarized rankings as High

*Table 12-3. Rankings of Vereotypes and Self-Stereotypes for American and Japanese Males, together with Impressions that Japanese Have of American Males, and that Americans Have of Japanese Males (after Abate & Berrien, 1967)*

Needs	Americans			Japanese		
	Vereotype	Self Stereotype	Japanese Impressions	Verotype	Self-Stereotype	American Impressions
Achievement	H	H	H	M	H	M
Deference	L	L	H	L	H	L
Order	L	M	H	L	H	M
Exhibition	M	M	L	L	L	H
Autonomy	M	M	M	H	L	M
Affiliation	M	H	H	M	M	H
Introspection	H	L	M	M	M	L
Succorance	L	L	L	H	M	L
Dominance	H	H	L	H	M	L
Abasement	L	L	L	H	H	L
Nurturance	L	M	M	H	H	M
Change	H	H	M	M	M	H
Endurance	M	M	H	H	H	L
Heterosexual	H	H	M	H	L	H
Aggression	M	L	L	L	L	M

Number of identical rankings

	Americans	Japanese
Vereotype vs. self-stereotype	10	9
Self-stereotype vs. others' impression	7	0
Vereotype vs. others' impression	4	3

The top-ranking 5 of the 15 needs in each column are indicated as High (H), the middle-ranking 5 as Middle (M), and the lowest-ranking 5 as Low (L).

(H), Middle (M), and Low (L). A review of similarities and differences shows that American males tend to view themselves in ways that are quite consistent with their vereotype, as indicated by the fact that 10 out of 15 pairs of rankings are identical. There is a modest relationship between the Japanese view of Americans and the Americans' view of themselves, for a scanning of the relationship between the second and third columns in the left half of the table shows that 7 out of 15 pairs of rankings are identical. Japanese views of Americans are less consonant with Americans' vereotypes, for a comparison of the first and third columns shows only four matches.

The self-stereotypes of the Japanese are about as consonant with their vereotypes as are the Americans with theirs (9 out of 15), but the Americans' impressions (stereotypes) of the Japanese are completely inconsistent with the Japanese self-stereotypes (0 out of 15), and there is only a weak relationship between the Americans' view of Japanese and the latter's vereotypes (3 out of 15).

The general impression is that the Japanese know the Americans better than the Americans know the Japanese. The fact that both groups see themselves in ways fairly consistent with their EPPS-derived vereotype can be accounted for by the fact that the EPPS is essentially a self-report questionnaire. One is tempted to say that the fact that Americans' self-stereotypes are similar to the Japanese stereotypes of them lends some validity to both sets of perceptions, but the lack of correspondence between Japanese self-stereotypes and Americans' stereotypes of them raises puzzling questions. One possibility is that Americans have more self-insight than Japanese do, but another possibility is that Americans are more self-revealing than are Japanese. Still another possibility is that Japanese have more exposure to the American culture than Ameri-

cans have to the Japanese culture. All these interpretations may be valid, but the last of the three seems most plausible: there is little doubt, for example, that more Japanese speak and read English, than Americans speak and read Japanese. The difference may thus be accounted for to large extent by the greater amount of exposure that Japanese have experienced with respect to the other culture.

The amount of exposure to a culture proved to be a factor in two studies of the accuracy of heterostereotypes conducted by the present author and Joseph Marrash (1970) and by the present author and Amelia Tebcherani (1971). In the Lindgren-Marrash study, Lebanese secondary school students were asked to indicate the traits more characteristic of Americans in 26 contrasting pairs of British and American personality descriptions. The descriptions, in effect, constituted vereotypes of the two cultures, for they had been derived by factor analysis from personality questionnaires completed by British and American subjects in an earlier study by Jamison and Comrey (1968). Inasmuch as British and American cultures have many similar aspects, the task called for a fairly high degree of familiarity with the two cultures and some sophistication as well. The investigators hypothesized that Armenian students in Lebanon would be more accurate than Arab students in making the distinctions, because the former are more Westernized than the latter and can be expected to seek more exposure to both British and American cultures. Results confirmed the hypothesis.

In the Lindgren-Tebcherani study, male American and English-speaking Arab university students were asked to rate themselves on 250 adjectives taken from the Gough Adjective Checklist. Significant differences between the two groups were found on 44 of the adjectives. The adjectives considered by the subjects to be most characteristic of themselves are listed

**Table 12-4. Self-Concepts of Male American and English-Speaking Arab University Students (Lindgren & Tebcherani, 1971)**

Which 17 of the following self-descriptions were the ones chosen by Arabs? (Answers precede the summary of the chapter.)

1. individualistic	16. unaffected	31. reflective
2. dependable	17. dignified	32. assertive
3. suggestible	18. rigid	33. enterprising
4. easy-going	19. shy	34. handsome
5. changeable	20. insightful	35. civilized
6. distrustful	21. sarcastic	36. awkward
7. defensive	22. submissive	37. lazy
8. conventional	23. rebellious	38. deliberate
9. timid	24. adventurous	39. slow
10. impatient	25. unconventional	40. fair-minded
11. modest	26. withdrawn	41. interests wide
12. foolish	27. cold	42. distractible
13. mischievous	28. conservative	43. flirtatious
14. versatile	29. suspicious	44. worrying
15. informal	30. restless	

in Table 12-4. The reader may be interested in seeing if he can guess which 17 of the 44 adjectives were the ones chosen by Arab students.

The adjectives were organized in the form of a 30-item forced-choice questionnaire in the following manner:

individualistic \_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_ suggestible  
 dignified \_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_ dependable  
 foolish \_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_ rigid

The investigators hypothesized that inasmuch as Arabs would feel that they had more to gain from becoming involved with Americans, than Americans would with Arabs, Arabs would be more aware of American self-stereotypes than Americans would of Arab self-stereotypes. Results confirmed this hypothesis. Arab students made a mean accuracy score of 18.8 out of 30 in guessing American self-stereotypes, whereas Americans' guesses averaged only 14.6, or slightly under chance.

## *Empathy*

The Abate-Berrien and the Lindgren-Tebcherani studies can also be considered as investigations of cross-cultural empathy, in that in each instance members of one ethnic group are asked to predict how members of another group perceive themselves. Empathy, as we noted in Chapter 9, refers to the ability to take on another's role and thus become aware of his feelings, as well as his motives—his attitudes, values, and beliefs. Eugene A. Weinstein (1969) describes empathy as an ability "to assess accurately the other's definition of the situation" [p. 758]. It is differentiated from sympathy in that empathy is an *ability* that requires sensitive awareness, whereas sympathy is a behavioral tendency that not only involves awareness, but also implies a willingness to take on another's mood, especially when the other individual is fearful, anxious, or depressed. Both empathy and sympathy are important

for satisfactory interpersonal relations, but empathy is more easily defined and measured as a kind of interpersonal perceptual skill.

### *Ascertaining other's feelings and emotions*

Empathic accuracy depends, of course, on our ability to make accurate interpretations of the information others give us about their internal states. We can tell at a glance whether another is happy, sad, worried, angry, or bored, usually by the position his facial muscles have assumed—smiling, frowning, sneering, or whatever. Posture, voice, and gestures also provide important clues about the target person's mood, usually when they serve to accentuate or corroborate the information communicated by the facial muscles, but also when he wishes to conceal facts about his current state by presenting a bland face or one that is inconsistent with other information present in the situation. A graduate student making a presentation before a seminar may at first glance seem to be displaying no emotion, but his hurried speech and tense gestures tell us of his feelings of inadequacy and anxiety.

There has been some controversy among behavioral scientists with respect to the question of whether there are any "universals" in the communication of emotion and feeling. Laughter ordinarily serves the purpose of expressing joy, but in some cultures, it indicates anger and scorn. Japanese smile to show pleasure, but they also use the smile to indicate embarrassment. Such complications suggest that there may be no "universals" in emotional expression that transcend cultural boundaries. On the other hand, chimpanzees' moods are readily discernible because they seem so "human," and this suggests that there are universal ways of expressing emotion after all.

Paul Ekman and Wallace V. Friesen (1971) have addressed themselves to these issues by conducting surveys among New Guinea tribesmen. Subjects were divided into those who had had little or no previous contact with representatives of Western cultures and those whose contact had been fairly extensive. The technique used was that of presenting the subject with three pictures of faces, each displaying a different emotion; telling a brief story; and asking the subject to indicate which face best expressed the emotion described in the story. Results showed that there was a high degree of agreement as to which face was appropriate. Happiness was the emotional expression most easily identified; there was 92% agreement among the subjects. Percentages of agreement for other emotional expressions were: anger, 85%; sadness, 70%; disgust, 83%; surprise, 68%; and fear, 64%. The only consistent misidentification occurred when 67% of the subjects showed a preference for the "surprise" face in a situation calling for the expression of fear.

The results were virtually identical for the group of tribesmen who had had considerable exposure to Westerners.

Ekman and Friesen interpret their results as confirming their hypothesis that "particular facial behaviors are universally associated with particular emotions" [p. 128].

The difficulties in cross-cultural interpretation of emotional expression occur when cultures disagree as to what situations should be emotionally arousing and what emotions are appropriate for said situations. In other words, although there seems to be agreement on what a happy or a sad face looks like, there is some intercultural disagreement as to what calls for happy or sad faces. It is here that social learning intervenes. As Ekman (1972) points out, by late childhood, these culturally determined and learned elicitors of emotion, by their sheer numbers, overwhelm the unlearned ones. As

a result, funerals in one culture are interpreted as calling for what is universally recognized as a "sad" face, whereas funerals in other cultures call for a smiling or "happy" face. This is not to say whether the emotions expressed are the same or different; one must know more about the attitudes, values, beliefs, and customs of the two cultures in order to make that determination.

If the emotions expressed toward funerals are the same in the two cultures, but the prescribed "face" is different, the second culture is engaged in a device known as "masking," in which the individual deliberately represents his emotion as being something other than it actually is. Masking obviously complicates the task of the empathizer, particularly when the target person insists that his facial expression represents his true feelings.

Ekman gives some examples from the North American culture that show how culturally determined "display rules" define the situation and the facial display that is appropriate. He notes that middle-class, white, adult, urban males are expected to neutralize or mask sadness or fear in public; expressions of sadness and fear are permitted to females having similar social status, but they are denied the free expression of anger. (The smile is frequently used by females as a mask for anger and irritation.) In competitive situations, North American custom decrees that winners should tone down expressions of pleasure, while losers should neutralize expressions of irritation or depression, preferably by masking with expressions of cheerfulness and good humor. These rules apply to beauty contests, to sports, and to public displays in connection with business rivalries, such as competition for executive promotion.

### *Correlates of empathy*

The proper reading of others' feelings and emotions calls for a considerable degree of sensitiv-

ity, even when the others are members of our own culture. Although the question as to whether empathy is an ability that is possessed by some more than others was a matter of some controversy during the 1950's, the research of Victor B. Cline and James M. Richards, Jr. (1960) appears to have resolved some of the doubts. Their technique for measuring empathy consisted of showing subjects filmed interviews of target persons, whereupon the subjects attempted to answer questionnaires about the target person's usual emotional state. Here is an example:

When Mr. M. gets angry he usually:

- (a) ends up cursing obscenely
- (b) gets so upset he has to walk out or leave
- (c) tends to keep it to himself and hides his feelings

What is being tested here is not merely empathy that is specific to a given interpersonal situation, but a kind of "global" empathy that is concerned with predicting the target person's feelings in a variety of situations.

Cline and Richards found two dimensions related to accuracy in judging others. One aspect is what they called *stereotype accuracy*, the ability to judge people in general. The other they termed *differential accuracy*, the ability to respond to differences in target persons. The two skills had a positive but insignificant intercorrelation, with stereotype accuracy contributing more to the overall accuracy of the subjects making the judgments. It is possible that with greater exposure to the target person, differential accuracy could contribute more to empathy.

In a more recent review of research on interpersonal perception skills, Eugene A. Weinstein (1969) notes that empathy requires both intelligence and cue sensitivity. Intelligence is necessary, because the would-be empathizer must employ a high degree of cognitive skill in "mapping" the meanings of the target person's behavior. We must, furthermore, be able

to run through a large number of perspectives in rapid order, looking at the target person's behavior first one way, then another, in order to squeeze out all possible meanings for the behavior he observes and settling on those that are the most internally consistent and make the most sense. Hence, it is no surprise that the research literature consistently reports positive correlations between empathic skills and IQ.

Cue sensitivity refers to the individual's ability to ignore irrelevant stimuli in an interpersonal situation and to focus on aspects of behavior that may provide promising clues as to the target person's disposition and perceptions—the way he is “internally structuring reality,” to use Weinstein's phrase. This calls for a high degree of “recognition and discrimination of subtle differences in meaning between individuals and for the same individual in differing situations” [p. 759]. Weinstein notes that one must not be misled by purely verbal aspects of a social situation, because words are the most direct and at the same time the most easily falsified cues to a speaker's meanings. Persons rating high on empathic ability monitor indications of feeling and moods, as well as words, and hence are alert to vocal inflections, gestures, posture, and other physiognomic cues that might indicate a discrepancy between what is being said and what the target person “really means.”

Harrison Gough (1968) says that an impressionistic resumé of California Psychological Inventory scores of individuals displaying the greatest accuracy in interpersonal perception suggests that they seem to show normality, adaptability, resourcefulness, reserve (as indicated by a preference for “sitting on the sidelines”), and a moderate degree of self-doubt. As one might expect, such persons would also score low on authoritarianism, as measured by the F scale (Allport, 1954).

Weinstein observes that children develop empathy through taking on a variety of roles—the more roles, the greater the oppor-

tunity to develop the kind of awareness of how others in those roles think and feel. Parental encouragement to try roles is, of course, helpful in “learning to be empathic,” but other factors are important as well. For many children, opportunities to be exposed to and to try out a variety of roles are not available. “Lower-class children are less likely to have the experiences that will facilitate role-taking accuracy, especially with those outside their class”, [p. 763]. This not only limits their empathic development, but restricts their social mobility as well.

### *Increasing empathy through exposure to the other*

We noted earlier that common sense would suggest that the greater the exposure to the target person, the greater the empathy, but Weinstein's description makes it clear that more is involved than mere exposure. There is some evidence to suggest that empathy is sometimes worsened by more exposure to a target person or group. The present writer has found, when using the forced-choice test of Arab and American self-descriptions, referred to above, that students at the California State University at San Francisco, who have had no contact with Arabs, tend to do somewhat better in empathizing with Arab responses than Americans attending a university in an Arab country. Victor B. Cline (1968) has concluded from his research that seeing the target person can often reduce the accuracy of one's perception. This seems to be contrary to what Weinstein has said about cue sensitivity, but actually Cline is referring to the occasional situation in which target persons apparently *do mean what they say* and send out false information in body movement. Cline describes an experiment in which judges (subjects) saw filmed interviews of target persons and then indicated on a questionnaire how they thought the targets actually behaved in everyday life. In the situation referred to by Cline, one of the films



... showed a very attractive young blonde woman who had a considerable impact on all audiences who saw her. She tended to project the image of a very sexy blonde with a great deal of animal vitality. It was found that most judges rarely ever listened to what she had to say and responded primarily to her visual impact which was considerable. Most judges did quite poorly in judging her. If however, they merely *read* a transcript of what she said or even just *heard* what she said without ever seeing her, they almost invariably did far better in their judgments because then they focused primarily on the content of her verbal communication which was quite revealing, direct, open and could be taken for the most part at face value. Or as this woman said to our interviewer, "Nobody ever listens to what I have to say" [p. 11]

Another interesting example of how empathy can be encumbered by too much data comes from a study by Harrison Gough (1968), in which he used a technique similar to the one described above. Gough's study began in Italy, where he made films of four Italians being interviewed. From the personality test responses and other biographical data, he prepared questionnaires appropriate to each of these target persons. When Italian judges, informed only as to the sex of the targets, attempted to predict the targets' responses without seeing the films, the mean score was 35.5, which was significantly above chance, as represented by a score of 29.6. What this shows is that it is possible to empathize somewhat with a target person if one knows only the individual's sex. The judges who saw the films, however, had a mean accuracy score of 38.6, showing that even a few minutes' exposure to a target person tends to facilitate empathy.

Seeing the films did not aid the empathy of all types of judges, however. University stu-

dents in Berkeley, California, got a mean score of 36.9 when they tried to guess the self-descriptions of the target persons before they had seen the films and were informed only as to the sex and nationality of the targets. This is slightly but not significantly higher than the mean score for Italian judges under the same condition. After they had completed the questionnaires, the judges saw the films and filled out the questionnaires a second time. They approached this task with somewhat more confidence than the first time, because, even though they knew no Italian, they reported that they found the experience meaningful, stimulating, and rich in informative clues. The results did not bear out this optimistic prediction, for their mean accuracy score dropped to 32.9.

It appears that in this instance, less information was better than more information, and that stereotypes were a better guide to empathizing than exposure to the targets. The difference between the performance of the Italian and the American judges is, of course, easily explained by the fact that the Italian judges were more expert in interpreting both the verbal and the nonverbal information that Italian target persons reveal. In brief, more information can facilitate empathizing only if the observer is qualified to use it. Otherwise it may be distracting.

### *Empathy and projection*

When we are faced with a situation in which we have insufficient information about target persons, but must nonetheless make some judgment about their probable feelings or motives, we have little choice but to assume that they are like some other persons or groups, and, unless we have information to the contrary, that 'other' is likely to be ourselves. In other words, when faced by an ambiguous other, our tendency is to assume that he is like

us. The tendency to make such assumptions and arrive at incorrect impressions of the other may be termed *projection*. Tendencies to project, rather than empathize, tend to be rather strong and operate without our being aware of them. Often they take precedence and act as a filter so that we do not perceive information about the other that would act as a corrective.

An example of this tendency to project in intercultural situations is the American tendency to value openness and frankness. We like to think of ourselves in this way, and we take it as a compliment when we are described by others in such terms. Consequently, when we want to express positive attitudes about individuals from other cultures, we also tend to think of them as possessing the qualities we prize in ourselves. Hence, Peace Corps volunteers headed for the Philippines were urged by staff members to be "perfectly frank" with Filipinos, a bit of advice that turned out to be devastating. Filipinos value "smooth interpersonal relationships" and do not want them damaged or disrupted by openness and frankness (Guthrie, 1966). Indeed, it is quite likely that the North American culture is one of the few that prizes this trait. Mexicans, for example, tend to regard openness as a form of weakness or treachery (Fayerweather, 1959), and the research we have cited dealing with Greeks and Arabs suggests that frankness and openness have negative or low values in those cultures. It is possible that members of these three cultures, too, value "smooth interpersonal relationships" more than North Americans do.

### *Effects of dogmatism and prejudice on empathy*

Although it is generally held that the personality of the individual is a major factor in his ability to empathize, there have been relatively few investigations of this relationship. Jacob Jacoby (1971), however, has conducted an experiment

in which graduate students were organized into small groups and worked for ten weeks on group research projects relevant to their field of study. The students had been tested on a form of Rokeach's dogmatism scale, a scale we discussed briefly in Chapter 5, one that is designed to measure the extent to which a respondent is "open" or "closed" to relevant information. Dogmatism is characterized by rigidity and is, as we noted, positively correlated with authoritarianism. Persons scoring high on the scale are less perceptive of environmental detail, more conventional, more stereotyped, and more emotionally controlled than are persons scoring low on the scale.

When the students were asked to rate one another on dogmatism at the end of the ten-week period, those who were open-minded (low scorers) tended to be more accurate perceivers of others' dogmatism than were those who were closed-minded (high scorers). To put this in other words, open-minded subjects tended to be more empathic than closed-minded subjects. There was also an interesting but hardly surprising tendency for almost all the subjects to estimate that others rated higher in dogmatism than they did.

A study of the interaction between race, prejudice, and empathy was conducted by Warner Wilson (1970). Subjects were groups of relatively unprejudiced and relatively prejudiced white students from the University of Alabama and black students from Fisk University. The groups all ranked fourteen goals related to race relations. Table 12-5 summarizes some of Wilson's findings. Although prejudiced (W-P) and unprejudiced (W-U) whites are similar in 8 of the 14 rankings, unprejudiced whites are much more similar to blacks in their rankings (7 out of 14) than prejudiced whites are (4 out of 14). Unprejudiced whites also have more empathy for black goals (8 out of 14) than prejudiced whites do (5 out of 14). When black students are asked what

**Table 12-5. Priority Rankings<sup>a</sup> of Policies (Goals) Regarding Interracial Relations by Relatively Prejudiced White Students (W-P), Relatively Unprejudiced White Students (W-U), and Black Students (B), together with Indications of How Each Racial Group Perceived the Ranking of the Other (after Wilson, 1970)**

Goals	Rankings by:		Whites' rankings as perceived by: B	Rankings by: B	Blacks' rankings as perceived by:	
	W-P	W-U			W-P	W-U
Improvement of substandard schools attended by children of any race	H	H	H	M	L	M
Law and order	H	M	H	L	L	L
More vocational training in schools	H	M	H	L	M	M
Creation of more jobs	H	L	H	M	L	L
Equal rights to hold office and vote	H	H	L	H	H	H
Equal employment rights	M	H	L	H	H	H
Low-cost housing	M	M	H	L	M	M
Equitable administration of welfare funds	M	M	M	M	L	L
Equality of treatment by police and courts	M	H	M	H	H	H
Courtesy and respect for Negroes	L	H	M	H	M	H
More welfare funds	L	L	M	L	H	L
School integration	L	L	L	M	H	H
Open housing laws	L	L	L	H	M	M
Negroes' rights to mix with and/or intermarry with whites	L	L	L	L	L	L
Number of identical rankings out of 14						
W-P and W-U	8		Empathy of W-P for B	5		
W-P and B	4		Empathy of W-U for B	8		
W-U and B	7		Empathy of B for W-P	9		
			Empathy of B for W-U	5		

<sup>a</sup>Rankings in the original study have been combined so that ranks 1-5 are High (H), 6-9 are Medium (M), and 10-14 are Low (L).

white goals are, they report the prejudiced white goals (9 out of 14), rather than the unprejudiced white goals (5 out of 14). In other words, although prejudiced and unprejudiced whites perceive black goals differentially, the

image the black student has of white people corresponds to that of the prejudiced, rather than the unprejudiced, white.

What the study shows is that the prejudiced white is relatively unaware of black goals, but

that the unprejudiced white has more sensitivity for them. On the other hand, the stereotypes of black students are quite accurate in reference to the prejudiced white, but do not take into account those of the unprejudiced white. For this group of black subjects, it seems as though the unprejudiced white does not exist, or at least is not a very significant segment of the white population.

### *Interpersonal and Intergroup Interaction*

#### *Contact and prejudice*

Common sense tells us that the way to maintain or increase one's prejudices against an individual is to avoid contact with him, and that the best way to reduce prejudice is to come in contact with him and get to know him. This principle works much of the time, as everyday experience and research have shown. The principle involved here is the adaptation or accommodation effect, whereby the threat value of a stimulus becomes reduced with repeated exposure.

Because the principle works most of the time, this does not mean that it works in every situation. Recall that empathy can be heightened and facilitated by exposure to target persons, but that much depends on the motivation of the observer and the conditions under which exposure takes place. Similarly with prejudice reduction.

Yehuda Amir (1969) has reviewed a large number of studies dealing with the effects of contact on the reduction of prejudice and has found that increasing contact between members of different ethnic groups tends to produce changes in intergroup attitudes, but that much depends on the situation in which the increased contact occurs. For instance, attitude changes may apply only to specific situations

in which contact occurs, and not to other situations. Black and white soldiers, for example, may develop mutual acceptance and respect working together in battle, but may remain segregated and even engage in mutual harassment when on leave.

Amir lists the favorable conditions that tend to reduce prejudice:

1. Equal-status contact.
2. The contact is between majority group members and *higher-status* minority group members.
3. An "authority" and/or a social climate favors and promotes intergroup contact.
4. Contacts are intimate (e.g., living together), rather than casual (e.g., commercial transactions).
5. Contacts are pleasant or otherwise rewarding.
6. Majority and minority group members interact and *both* work toward mutual goals that are more important to them than the individual goals of each group.

Situations that have the effect of increasing prejudice are:

1. Competition between groups.
2. Contacts are unpleasant, involuntary, and laden with tension.
3. Contacts lower the prestige or status of one of the groups.
4. The members of a group are in a state of frustration (because of inadequate personality structure, recent defeat or failure, economic depression, etc.) which may lead to the members of the other group being designated as "scapegoats."
5. The groups have moral or ethnic standards of conduct that are objectionable to each other.
6. Contacts emphasize status differentials between the groups.

Amir examined plans for integration in

Israeli schools as an example of attempts to reduce prejudice and bring about intergroup acceptance. The problem in Israel is not racial but cultural and social. Israeli children whose parents are Western in origin are socioeconomically better off than are children whose parents are from Middle East countries. The differences are the classic ones between middle- and lower-class members that we noted in Chapter 8. Western-oriented children, for example, are likely to be superior in academic achievement, as well as in popularity and leadership. Amir admitted that contacts in integrated schools may reduce prejudice, but was not especially optimistic. He pointed out that intergroup contact in the Israeli army apparently had little effect on ethnic relations. In order for mutual acceptance among ethnic groups to occur, at least some of the favorable conditions outlined in the first list above must prevail, and the unfavorable conditions in the second list must be avoided or eliminated.

Intergroup prejudice can be reduced or eliminated only when members of antagonistic groups are prepared to give up something that is psychologically valuable to them—attitude, belief, value, status, perceptual style, or whatever. Giving up something is always difficult, especially when group members feel certain (as they usually do) that what they are being asked to give up is more valuable than what the other group is giving up.

### *Proxemics*

Our consideration of contact between members of different groups leads us to the topic of *proxemics* and such related concepts as personal space and territoriality.

The distance we select as appropriate between ourselves and others is a matter of some psychological importance and meaning. This is brought out in a study by Frank N. Willis, Jr. (1966), who had students measure the

distance between themselves and persons who spoke to them in informal situations. Their findings, as reported in Table 12-6, show that there tends to be greater distance between a communicator and his audience if they are strangers, than if they are friends. A person who initiates a conversation when he is very close either behaving rather aggressively or is saying, in effect: "I perceive that we are friends." The point at which he elects to start the conversation is thus a part of the communication. If he selects an inappropriate point—that is, if a stranger comes too close or a friend remains too distant—the general effect of the communication may be clouded or rendered ambiguous. Instead of paying careful

*Table 12-6. Distances (in inches) at Which Conversations Are Initiated by Persons Occupying Various Social Positions (Willis, 1966)\**

Position of person initiating conversation	Distance
Stranger	27.3
Acquaintance	23.8
Peer	23.9
Older person	26.7
Parent	26.0
Friends	19.5
Caucasian to Caucasian	22.0
Caucasian to Negro	28.0
Negro to Negro	24.0
Woman to woman	
Acquaintance	22.4
Friend	26.2
Close friend	17.8
Man to man	
Acquaintance	23.8
Friend	22.3
Close friend	23.1
Position of audience	
Woman	21.6
Man	24.5

attention to what the stranger is saying to us, we may be thinking such things as, "I don't like his oily, confidential manner," "Who does he think he is?," or "He certainly is presumptuous." Conversely, a friend who stands too far away is likely to evoke the feeling, "I wonder what is bothering him." In fact, the description "standoffish" is used to describe a person whose attitude is characterized by an undue amount of distance—physical or social.

Distances at which conversations are carried on also vary with cultures. Edward T. Hall, Jr. (1955) reports that distances of 8 to 13 inches between Latin American or Middle East men engaged in conversation are quite common, whereas in the United States such a distance would be considered very chummy or very aggressive. When North Americans converse with men from Latin America or the Middle East, they are likely to express some degree of discomfort at their conversation partner's aggressive familiarity. Since the natural reaction of the North American is to withdraw from such close contact, Latin Americans and Arabs are likely to describe North Americans as cold, distant, and haughty. North Americans design their automobiles with wide seats because they value "apartness," whereas Latin Americans do not know what to do with all the space in a typical American car, since they value closeness.

A British couple spoke with some irritation of their experiences in picnicking in the Lebanese countryside. They said that they liked to look for a pleasant nook in which to relax and enjoy their food in peace and solitude, so that whenever they stopped and started to unpack their picnic things, Lebanese driving down the road would also stop and set up their picnics nearby. In England, once a family had staked out a picnic spot, other Sunday drivers would recognize it as that family's territory and would seek picnic spots elsewhere. The English, like the Americans, value privacy and apartness, but

Mediterranean peoples (including Latin Americans) prefer close, chummy sociability. The distance selected by the other means one thing to the English and North American, and something else to the Latin American and the Mediterranean person.

Hall's ideas regarding preferences of Americans for greater rather than lesser interpersonal distances are supported by research to some extent. In one study, friendly or hostile speakers delivered messages intended to persuade from distances set at 1-2 feet, 4-5 feet, or 14-15 feet from a subject. At the middle distance (4-5 feet), subjects thought more about the content of the message, which dealt with information and solutions regarding the problem of overpopulation, and less about the speaker's appearance. On the other hand, the far distance gave the best results when it came to changing the listener's attitude, and the close-distance stance gave the poorest results. As Figure 12-3 shows, a hostile speaker at a

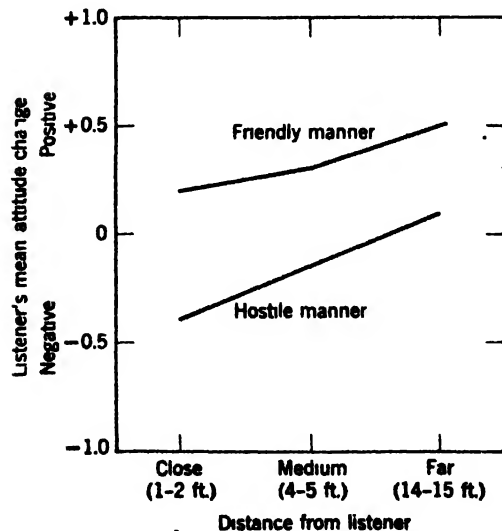
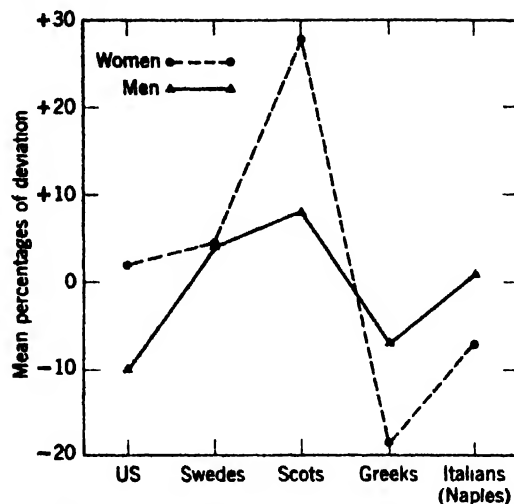


Figure 12-3. Effect of speaker's manner and distance from listener on listeners' mean attitude change in favor of or against proposals dealing with population control (Albert & Dabbs, 1971).

close distance provoked a change in attitude contrary to the main thrust of the arguments, an effect probably due to the target persons' finding the implied intimacy threatening and objectionable (Albert & Dabbs, 1970).

When Hall referred to American preferences for interpersonal distances, he probably had in mind middle-class Americans. John R. Aiello and Stanley E. Jones (1971) investigated the proxemic relationships of interacting pairs of first- and second-grade American children from three subcultural groups: middle-class whites, lower-class blacks, and lower-class Puerto Ricans. Their results showed that white middle-class children stood about a foot apart, whereas children from the other two groups tended to stand a little less than six inches apart.

Although members of Latin American and Middle East cultures tend to stand closer together than North Americans when they interact, there are a number of cultures that prefer even greater interpersonal distances. Kenneth B. Little (1968) investigated preferred distances among male and female Americans, Swedes, Scots, Greeks, and Southern Italians (from Naples) by asking them to place scale models of male and female adults in relative position to one another to represent 19 different conversational situations, such as "two good friends talking about a pleasant topic," "a policeman questioning a person about some burglaries that have occurred in the neighborhood," and "two people talking about the best place to shop." Some interesting cross-cultural differences emerged, and readers are urged to look at Table 2 in the original article. In the police inquiry situation, for example, Scottish subjects saw the proper distance between the policeman and a woman as slightly over four feet, whereas Greek respondents saw it as about two-and-one-third feet. Figure 12-4 gives the mean preferred interpersonal distances for men and women in the five cultures, all 19 situations, and both sexes. As Figure 12-4



*Figure 12-4. Preferred differences between persons engaged in 19 types of conversational situations, as expressed by American, Swedish, Scottish, Greek, and Italian (Neapolitan) male and female subjects, reported in terms of mean percentages of variation from an overall mean of 31 inches (after Little, 1968).*

indicates, the greatest interpersonal variations are to be found between members of the Scottish and Greek cultures, with Scottish women preferring a distance that is almost 30% greater than the overall mean, and Greek women preferring a distance that is almost 20% less than the mean. As Hall would have predicted, the Northern European Scots and Swedes tend to prefer greater distances than do the Greek and Neapolitan subjects, but the finding that Americans prefer intermediate distances was unexpected. American males, as a matter of fact, expressed a preference for closer distances than did any of the other groups of male subjects.

The reasons why Little's study failed to confirm Hall's impression of American patterns of proxemics are conjectural but well worth considering. One possibility is that the subjects in Little's study were all university students, who

can hardly be considered to represent a cross section of their culture. It can be argued, however, that the restriction of samples to university students is legitimate, because revealed differences are due to culture and not to social class. Another possibility is that the use of dolls may not be a valid way of measuring cross-cultural proxemics. The argument against this criticism is that the differences between Northern and Southern Europeans are in the expected direction, and one is, therefore, forced to say that the doll method is valid for European groups, but not for Americans. Still another possibility is that American university students only prefer closer and warmer interpersonal relations than did the generation observed by Hall.

Some further validity for Little's method is provided by an investigation in which American and Indian male subjects were asked to imagine various interpersonal relationships (e.g., teacher-student, policeman-pedestrian, man and female friend, etc.) and to indicate, by placement of pairs of silhouette figures, how far they should be from each other in order to interact appropriately. The investigators hypothesized, on the basis of behavioral standards prevailing in the United States and in India, that American subjects would place the figures closer together than would Indian subjects. Not only was the hypothesis supported, but Indian subjects also placed the figures having the higher status in each of the pairs higher on a vertical plane than did American subjects, thus indicating a greater degree of social as well as physical distance (Bhalla & Turner, 1971).

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*Answers to the question in Table 12-4.* Items 3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, 34, 35, 39, and 44 represent the Arab self-descriptions, the remainder being American. Adjectives are ranked in order from the most to the least representative of their respective groups, according to the choices made by the respondents.

## Summary

Differences in roles and positions affect the way in which we perceive the data of our environment, including our own behavior. Any situation that makes us conscious of ourselves also brings about changes in perception, such as a greater awareness of differences. Being observed and evaluated by others sharpens self-awareness and has an arousal effect. In evaluating others, we tend to be impressed most by competent individuals. Their attractiveness may be enhanced, however, if they show that they are fallible by erring in minor ways and showing that they are not perfect. The same effect does not operate with less competent persons, who are liked less when they err. We are more attracted to evaluators whose initial low opinion of us changes for the better, than we are to those whose good opinion of us does not change. Conversely, we find evaluators whose originally good opinion of us worsens more objectionable than those whose poor opinion of us does not change.

There is a tendency for us to behave toward others in ways that get them to confirm our original and often invalid opinions of them. This type of "self-fulfilling prophecy" helps perpetuate much ethnic prejudice. Such prejudice can be reduced when individuals concerned make a conscious effort to moderate their prejudiced views and behave differently toward members of the out-group. Prejudice is also perpetuated by stereotypes—generalized impressions of others—that become rigid and laden with negative values. Some stereotyping is necessary in any kind of interpersonal or intergroup interaction. Stereotypes cause difficulties and misunderstandings when they lead us to ignore behavior of others that is inconsistent with our expectations for them. They may be corrected by exposing them to reality, but finding that reality is often a problem. Learning what members of the target



group think about themselves is one way of correcting our stereotypes (heterostereotypes) about them, although we should recognize that self-percepts (autostereotypes) also have their biases. Contact alone will not make intercultural stereotypes more favorable. Triandis and Vassiliou found that Americans who lived in Greece had less favorable impressions of Greeks than did Americans living in Illinois. On the other hand, Greeks attending the University of Illinois had more favorable impressions of Americans than did Greeks living in Greece. In the main, their survey shows a high degree of relationship between the autostereotypes of the two cultural groups and their stereotypes of each other. A comparative study of American and Japanese auto and heterostereotypes shows that Japanese know Americans better than Americans know Japanese. This may be because Americans are more self-revealing, but it may also be due to the fact that Japanese seek more information about Americans than Americans do about Japanese. A similar effect was found with respect to Arabs and Americans. If this awareness of the feelings and motives of others can be termed *empathy*, it appears that Japanese and Arabs are more empathic toward Americans than Americans are toward Japanese and Arabs.

Empathy is differentiated from sympathy in that it consists of a sensitive *awareness* of a target person's feelings and motives, without going so far as to *share* them. Ascertaining others' feelings presents relatively few problems for members of the same cultural group, but intercultural differences raise the question as to whether there are any universals in the expression of emotion. The work of Ekman and Friesen with primitive New Guinea tribesmen shows that there are facial expressions that have universal currency as far as emotions are concerned. Each culture, however, specifies what situations call for what kinds of emotional expression by masking—pretending that one

has no feelings or that one's feelings are different from what one really feels.

Empathy is facilitated by our awareness of how people in general behave as well as our sensitivity to interpersonal differences. It is a task that calls for a considerable degree of intelligence as well. Empathy is hampered by authoritarian attitudes but is facilitated by a familiarity with a large number of roles. Exposure to the target persons may help as well, but not always. The would-be empathizer must want to understand the feelings of the target persons and also cannot afford to be misled by false information they consciously or unconsciously broadcast about themselves. In some instances, stereotypes are a better basis for predicting the responses of others, especially when one is unfamiliar with their language and culture. When we lack information about others but still must make a judgment, we are inclined to assume they are like us; that is, to project our own feelings and motive system onto them. This can cause misunderstandings in cross-cultural situations. Dogmatic and/or prejudiced persons tend to be less empathic, as one might expect. In one study of race, prejudice, and empathy, unprejudiced white students had a better idea of black students' goals than did prejudiced white students. When black students were asked to indicate what they thought whites' goals were with respect to interracial relations, they showed an awareness of the goals of prejudiced whites and seemed to be unaware of the goals of unprejudiced whites.

Mere contact with target group members is often an insufficient basis for reducing prejudice toward them. Amir points out that prejudice can be reduced if the prejudiced person does not insist on a higher status, contacts are intimate and rewarding, and there are common goals. On the other hand, prejudice is aggravated if contacts are seen as unrewarding, competitive, degrading, frustrating, and objectionable and are also characterized by status

inequality. Contacts between Westernized and Middle East soldiers in the Israeli army evidently did little to reduce intergroup prejudice because the negative conditions were present and the positive ones were absent.

The psychological aspect of interpersonal distances is termed *proxemics*. In interpersonal contact, individuals occupying different social positions and statuses tend to select different

distances as a basis for interacting with one another. In general, the less the intimacy and the greater the status differential, the greater the distance selected for conversations. Latin American and Mediterranean cultures value physical closeness, Northern Europeans and people from India value more distance. Americans appear to occupy a medial position in terms of the amount of distance they prefer.



*Henry Clay  
Lindgren*

# Chapter 13

## Communication

In Chapter 12 we discussed social perception—ways in which we pick up and respond to information generated by target persons or groups. In this chapter we broaden the scope of our discussion and consider the transmitting as well as the receiving aspects of this interaction, as well as the process itself and the kind of data that are generated, transmitted, processed, and responded to. Social perception cannot take place without communication. In order for people to perceive one another, they must transmit information, intentionally or otherwise, in some kind of manageable form.

Communication is broader than social perception in that it is concerned with the transmission and reception of all kinds of

data, not merely that which discloses the characteristics of another person. Although an individual reveals something of himself in any kind of message he transmits, often the main burden of the message relates to data that are less personal—the weather, how to do square root, the ball score, and the like.

### ***Transmitting and Receiving Information***

#### ***Communication as perceived by laymen and psychologists***

The layman's view of communication is likely to be relatively simple: everyone communicates or tries to; some understand; some do not. Laymen may also assume that people communicate because they have something to convey to others: information, feelings, demands, or arguments.

Although there is a great deal of validity to the layman's view, communication appears quite different to the behavioral scientist. For one thing, the behavioral scientist is likely to perceive complexities that laymen are inclined to overlook. For another, the layman's explanations of why people communicate leaves too much behavior unexplained. For example, why do people express so much misinformation and why do they communicate when they really have nothing to say? And why do they communicate in ways that disguise, rather than reveal, their feelings?

The complexities of communication are difficult to understand whether we are laymen or scientists, because we are continually engaged in it. We are always involved in sending, receiving, coding, or encoding messages: we exist in a psycho-social field that is rich and even over-rich in communication. At times this can be very distracting, because so many different messages are being transmitted simultaneously. Seated at the breakfast table, we glance over

the headlines. A dozen reporters' stories are clamoring for our attention. The kitchen radio is telling us to buy a new car, and our wife is admonishing the children. The telephone rings and the children compete with each other for the chance to answer it. The siren of an ambulance or perhaps a fire engine sounds in the distance, and someone down the street is blowing his horn to tell his car pool member that he is ready and impatient to get going. Another communication-rich day has begun.

#### ***Communication as a tool***

Most people would probably think of communication primarily in terms of what it does for them. Communication in this sense is a process that enables us to send and receive messages carrying information and thus to attempt to exercise some control over our environment. To return to the breakfast table, we learn that the coffee is boiling hot, that our toast is ready, and that Ron's scout meeting is this evening. We say that we passed a restless night, feel irritable and edgy, will probably be a little late getting home from work, and please pass the butter. Information is exchanged, feelings are expressed, demands are made, and people are placed on notice that events have occurred, will occur, or may occur. As we use communication in this way, it is our servant, and we are its master.

This is an egocentric and essentially common-sense view of communication. It is valid up to a point, but is too limited to satisfy the behavioral scientist because it does not take into account a great many side effects that may at times be more significant than the intent and the more obvious informational burden of the messages being sent and received. Furthermore, it ignores a number of ways in which we use communication over and beyond those of transmitting and receiving direct information.

It is easily understandable, however, why we

should take a narrow view of communication. As we go about the tasks of everyday life, we are not likely to be concerned about the fine points, the details, and the nuances of communication behavior. It would be inconsistent with our roles as parent, student, secretary, or whatever, to become preoccupied with the kinds of communication phenomena that interest the behavioral scientist. Problems that intrigue him seem irrelevant at such times, just as the problems we experience in trying to communicate are generally of little interest to him.

The problem in communication that we are most likely to be concerned with is that of finding ways to express ourselves adequately—finding the proper terms and phrases, avoiding statements that give others the wrong impression, trying to get others to talk about matters

that interest *us*, and so forth. We are keenly aware of such problems when we struggle to find the right words to describe our complicated feelings, or when we hear friends and acquaintances express themselves so much more vividly than we can. We may even find ourselves somewhat jealous of our more eloquent friends who always say things so well and who seem to have no trouble gaining the attention of the audience. At such times, our communication problem appears to be that of making a poorer representation of ourselves than we would like to make.

Raymond A. Bauer (1964), a specialist in communication at the Harvard School of Business, has pointed out that a major difference between the lay public and behavioral scientists is that the former tend to look upon communi-



Drawing by  
Mahood; © 1971  
The New Yorker  
Magazine, Inc.

*"What is most depressing is that these platitudes are being simultaneously translated into five languages."*

cation as a situation in which a communicator manipulates or brings about changes in an audience. The communication of information, for example, is motivated by a conviction that the audience will accept the information and will behave accordingly. An obvious example of this belief can be found in advertising. The advertiser assumes that if his message reaches its intended audience, it will bring about some change in the audience's behavior: the audience will buy his product instead of another or will drop whatever it happens to be doing (sometimes the audience is instructed to do exactly that) and go out in search of the advertised product, money in hand.

### *Communication as a transaction*

The behavioral scientist, according to Bauer, is more likely to think of communication as a transactional affair and to assume that communication has not taken place unless the audience has been involved in some more or less active way. Attending—that is, listening, watching, trying to understand—would be one example of involvement. Becoming engaged in a dialogue would be another example. However, there is no real transaction and hence no real communication unless both parties, communicator and audience, believe they have something to gain thereby.

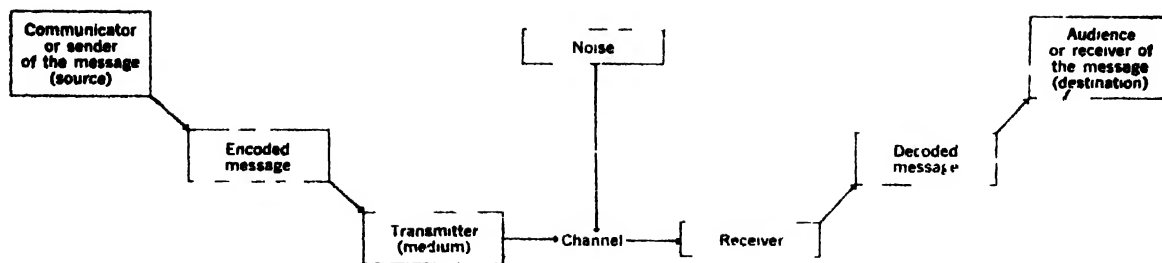
Figure 13-1 presents a diagram of such a transaction. A state of tension builds up in the communicator to the point where he feels compelled to communicate some information that is directly or indirectly related to his feeling of tension. He selects a transmitter or medium for his communication. Ordinarily, the medium would be speech, but it also may be a gesture or a nudge. He could also communicate in writing, and he might also employ Morse code via shortwave radio. Whatever method he chooses, his information must be put in the form of a message, which, in turn, must be encoded in

a form that is compatible with the information and the type of transmitter used. The actual transmission takes the form of a signal that is sent from the transmitter to the receiver via the channel. What communication specialists call "noise" may intervene to distort the signal. Technically speaking, any variability in the message received, which could not have been predicted at its source, is attributed to "noise." "Noise" can intervene at any point in the system; in Figure 13-1 we have shown it in the channel. When the signal has been received, the audience perceives it as being a message, decodes it, and interprets it. The process is reversed when the receiver responds to the message and thus becomes a sender.

To put this into the framework of everyday experience, let us say that Linda sees Jim coming down the walk near the college library. Jim is deep in a book and is walking very slowly. Linda debates with herself as to whether she should disturb Jim, decides that social amenities should be observed, and says, "Hi!"

To review what has occurred up to this point, we note that a state of mild tension exists in Linda, one that is occasioned by Jim's appearance. This tension is a normal accompaniment to the realization that a friend is approaching. The uttering of a greeting not only reduces her tension somewhat, but also informs Jim that he has been recognized and is expected to respond. Linda could have put her message in the form of a friendly wave or a nod and a smile, but this type of signal would have been inappropriate because of Jim's involvement in the book.

If Jim is deeply engrossed in his book, however, he will not be aware that he has been signaled and will walk on. No communication has taken place. There is no transaction. Or he may pretend that he does not notice Linda and thus refuse to enter into a transaction. If, however, he does respond in kind, he goes through the same process of building up tension, encod-



**Figure 13-1.** Schematic representation of communication as a transaction. Communication takes place as follows: (a) There is a build up of tension in the communicator which leads to the desire to communicate information. He thus becomes the source of a message. (b) The information is encoded—that is, translated into some appropriate symbolic form (usually language or gesture). (c) The message in its encoded form is fed into an appropriate transmitter (e.g., the vocal apparatus) or sets of transmitters (e.g., the vocal apparatus and telephone). (d) The transmitter sends the message via channel in the form of a signal. (e) As the signal passes through the channel it is subject to noise that will result in distortion. (f) The receiver picks up the signal from the channel. (g) The signal is decoded. (h) The decoded message reaches its destination, the audience, who interprets it in order to determine its information content.

ing and uttering a signal, which is then perceived and decoded by Linda, who has now changed her role and has become an audience.

There is often a reciprocal effect in the lengths of messages produced by a pair of communicators. Perhaps something like this occurs if a communicator has only a small datum to communicate; it will generate a small amount of tension which is expressed in the form of a short message. Ordinarily, his short message will cause only a small build up of tension in his audience, who replies with a short message. If the communicator, however, has more information to communicate, he will put this in the form of a longer message. Listening to the longer message builds up more tension in his audience, who may discharge it by replying with a longer message than he would otherwise.

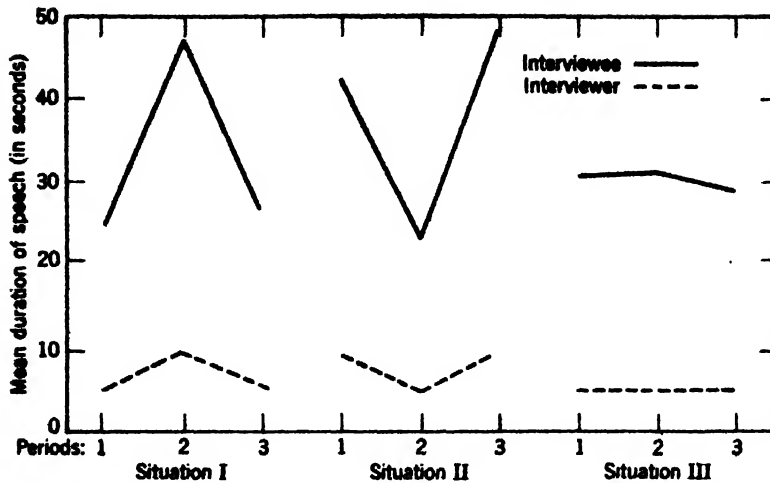
Joseph D. Matarazzo and others (1964) investigated the relationship between speech length in pairs of communicators by setting up situations in which interviewers carefully monitored the length of their questions and comments in the course of 45-minute interviews

with employment applicants. Three different types of situations were used. In Situation I, the interviewer's comments were about 5 seconds long initially, then increased to about 10 seconds, and finally reduced to 5 seconds. As Figure 13-2 shows, this 100% increase in interviewer speech length resulted in a similar increase in the response length of the interviewees. The opposite manipulation—10-5-10—produced a corresponding change in interviewee response length. In Situation II. In Situation III, where there was little variation in the interviewer's speech length, there was little variation in the speech length of the interviewees.

A similar relationship between speech *pauses* was reported by Matarazzo and Wiens (1967). In this set of experiments, the amount of time lapsing between the interviewee's ending his statement and the interviewer's posing his next question was varied. Again, the longer the interviewer waited before speaking, the longer the interviewee delayed his reply.

The researchers explained these phenomena





**Figure 13-2.** Mean interviewers' statement length in situations in which interviewee's statement length was systematically varied (Matarazzo et al., 1964).

in terms of social-learning theory, in which the participants in a conversation become each other's models. This reciprocal effect may also be viewed as the development of a norm by members of a two-person group.

### *Hot and cool media*

Audience arousal and involvement also figure in a theory developed by Marshall McLuhan (1964, 1967), who attracted a considerable degree of attention some years ago by his claims that the character of the medium of communication is often more significant in terms of the overall effect of a message than is the content of the message itself. Some communication media he described as "hot," because their signals are simple, direct, and require relatively little involvement in the form of decoding or interpretation on the part of the audience. Other media are "cool," because they require more involvement and, in effect, have to be "warmed up" by the audience. McLuhan gave radio as an example of a "hot" medium, one

that requires little of the listener, and television as a "cool" medium. Television images are two-dimensional and are perceived as lines. The viewer presumably has to "work" harder to interpret signals from a television set than he does from a radio. McLuhan also claimed that dramatic, excitable, "hot" people should communicate with others through "hot" media, in order to have maximum effect. The late Senator Joseph McCarthy, for example, was a "hot" person who was successful as long as he communicated with his public via a "hot" medium, radio, but who made a poor impression on a "cool" medium, television, according to McLuhan. Similarly, John F. Kennedy, a "cool" person, made a better showing on television than did Richard F. Nixon, a "hot" person.

The validity of this interpretation was tested in an experiment in which a political speech was presented over radio or television by an actor who presented a "hot" or a "cool" image of himself. In other words, there were four different types of presentation, each made to a different audience. The results did not confirm

McLuhan's contentions, for audiences tended to react more favorably to the "cool" actor than the "hot" one and to the television performance rather than to the radio performance. In other words, the "cool" performance on the "cool" medium received the most favorable response, as McLuhan would have predicted, but the poorest response was to the "hot" performance on the "hot" medium, contrary to McLuhan's contention. It appears that the degree of audience acceptance toward a message is influenced by more than the degree of involvement the medium demanded. Communication cannot take place unless the audience is interested enough to respond. One of the ways that audience involvement can be secured is through the communicator's encouraging feedback.

## Feedback

A few pages back we cited Raymond A. Bauer (1964), who criticized the commonly accepted concept of communication as essentially a one-way process. Theoretically, there is nothing to keep the process diagrammed in Figure 13-1 from being a one-way process, as long as the communicator continues to send forth its signals and the audience continues to decode them. In real situations, however, audiences quickly become saturated with information and stop receiving, even though they may, on occasion, go through the motions of pretending to receive and decode. As long as the audience participates, however, it will make some kind of response that can be picked up by the sender, if he wants to take the trouble. In this sense, even a blank *non*response can be interpreted as a reaction to a message. To be sure, this type of response, like many others, does not tell the sender *why* his message had no discernible effect, but it does alert him to the presence of communication problems—inattention on

the part of the receiver, noise in the channel, improper encoding, or whatever.

## Feedback as an orienting mechanism

What the sender does when he attempts to follow up on his message to determine what effect it has on the receiver is to become sensitive to what is termed *feedback*. Feedback is a term that psychologists have borrowed from electronics. It is a process that occurs when data regarding the performance of a system (a machine or an organism, for example) are fed back into the system to permit correction and adjustment of the performance.<sup>1</sup> The automatic pilot on transport airplanes operates on feedback principles. If changes in air currents carry the plane off course, the automatic pilot steers the plane back on course. If, in doing so, there is a degree of overcompensation, information fed back into the mechanism enables it to correct for that as well. Examinations and quizzes provide feedback information for instructors and students alike. Students can discover deficiencies in their learning strategies, instructors can discover how successful their teaching has been, and, presumably, both can make the necessary corrections in their future behavior.

A great deal of social learning can be regarded as the result of feedback. The various modes of behavior that children use in attempting to fit themselves into their family and culture evoke responses from parents peers, some positive and accepting, and some negative or neutral. These responses, in turn, provide information as to whether the behavior is appropriate or inappropriate. The appropriate behavior thus becomes reinforced and strengthened, and the inappropriate behavior

<sup>1</sup>The study of the regulation, control, and feedback of information in electrical circuits, machines, persons, and social groups is called *cybernetics* (Wiener, 1950).

drops out and is extinguished. This process goes on throughout life and forms the basis for our learning to adapt ourselves to the continually changing social situations in which we find ourselves. The more complex the situation, and the less sure we are of ourselves, the more we depend on feedback to keep us informed about what course of behavior to take. When learning a foreign language, for instance, we not only listen more carefully to what others say and how they pronounce their words, but we also scan their faces for clues to determine whether they have understood us and whether our pronunciation is acceptable. In speaking our own language in a comfortable social situation, we are usually less concerned about feedback.

### *Feedback and attribution of attitudes*

In our discussion of cognitive dissonance we described a number of experimental situations in which subjects' attitudes were changed as a result of their having publicly committed themselves on some issue in a way that was contrary to their usual beliefs or what was inconsistent with their previous behavior. In a way, these subjects were monitoring their own behavior and suddenly found themselves saying or doing something that was out of line with what they might have expected. This inconsistency was resolved by the subjects' deciding that perhaps their actions were not so unexpected after all and, without being precisely aware of what they were doing, shifting their motives in a way that made them more appropriate to the feedback they had received from their own performance.

This effect took place because of our tendency to use our own behavior on occasion as a point of reference for our feelings. Ordinarily, we find ourselves in a situation that evokes some kind of emotion, and we express the resulting feelings in some way we think is appropriate. The motive precedes the action,

but it all happens so quickly that both motive and action acquire a certain synonymity. An acquaintance, Jane, makes a slighting remark about Fred, someone we like, and we flash back with some cutting retort. Later, we think, "I never realized that Jane was so prejudiced and hostile." In other words, we are saying, "If Jane hadn't been so insulting, I wouldn't have reacted so vehemently." Or we might wonder, "I never knew that I admired Fred so." In other words, "I must admire Fred a great deal, or I wouldn't have sprung to his defense so quickly." Perhaps the feeling preceded the act in these instances, but it is also possible that we took our cue as to how we felt from how we acted. This effect can be explained by *attribution theory* in terms of our attempts to make sense of what we perceive.

An ingenious test of the effect of attribution based on feedback was conducted by Stuart Valins (1966), who asked male psychology students to participate in an experiment described to them as a study of physiological reactions to sexually oriented stimuli. They were told that their reactions would be recorded while they viewed ten slides of seminude females (taken from *Playboy* magazine). Some of the groups of subjects were told that they would hear their heartbeats played back to them. What they actually heard was a recording. For one experimental group, the heartbeats were slowed down for certain slides, and for another group, speeded up. A control group heard the same sounds, but were told that they were hearing extraneous noise. The subjects who thought they were hearing changes in their heartbeats while they were looking at certain slides tended to rate those slides as more attractive or appealing than slides which were accompanied by a normal heartbeat. In fact, the reinforcement had so powerful an effect that a follow-up survey without "heartbeats" taken three weeks after the experiment found the subjects still

expressing a greater degree of preference for the "reinforced" slides than for the others they had seen.

When subjects were interviewed after the experiment, they reported that they had been surprised by certain slides, although they did not at first know why. The surprise sometimes took the form of an attack of coughing or sneezing, or that of noticing a resemblance to a former girl friend. They assumed that the surprise was due to something about the slide that was being shown to them and decided to examine it more closely. When they did so, they concluded that the girl pictured on the slide was indeed more attractive than the others and hence deserved a high rating.

What occurred can best be explained by cognitive-dissonance theory. Dissonance was created for these students because they had not thought the girl pictured on the slide was any more attractive than the others, yet their "heartbeat" told them that they were responding differently to her. Dissonance was reduced by their decision that she was actually more attractive than they had thought at first. The fact that their decision to modify their rating of her made a significant impression on them is demonstrated by the finding that their preferences were still valid three weeks later.

Alternatively, the effect can be explained by attribution theory in terms of the subjects' attributing differences in their heartbeat to affective differences, which, in turn, were produced by differences in the stimuli being displayed by them.

### *Social pressure as feedback*

Our behavior, verbal or otherwise, is a source of information that others pick up and use as a basis for attributing this or that motive to our underlying behavior. They, in turn, generate messages that provide feedback informing us

as to the effect our actions have on them. Whether or not we seek this feedback, it is likely to have some kind of influence on our subsequent behavior. Because of it, we are led to change our behavior, continue to display it, or withdraw, in accordance with how we view ourselves and our relations with the group.

In the false-norm studies we reported in Chapter 6, subjects received feedback by observing the difference between their reports and those of others. Most of them modified their reports at some time or other during the experiment as a result of this feedback. When feedback takes on a negative tone (as, say, when others make adverse comments), the amount of compliance is increased, as it was in the study of Norwegian and French subjects who found themselves in disagreement with judgments of other "group members" who were actually tape-recorded voices of the experimenter's accomplices (Milgram, 1961). (See Figure 11-2.)

### *Empathy and feedback*

Empathy is obviously an important factor in feedback. Our skill in noting changes in feeling and attitude on the part of our audience enables us to determine whether our messages are getting through and what effect they are having. This information, once it has been fed back into our cognitive systems, further enables us to shift our approaches and to find more effective ways of communicating. The lecturer knows that he is losing the interest of the audience if he sees people talking to one another, shifting in their chairs, or showing other signs of restlessness. He can then change his pace in some way—by becoming more dramatic, stopping to tell a story, using more illustrations, or whatever. As the research we have just cited suggests, empathy also provides information that may lead us to change our minds as well

as our communication techniques. Learning that others differ with what we are saying, and probably do not approve of us for saying it, may lead us to decide that we do not believe what we are saying and instead believe something else. It is this kind of feedback that, in the final analysis, shapes our opinions of ourselves, particularly in our earlier and more formative years.

## ***Communication and Social Relationships***

### ***Social systems***

Probably the most fundamental fact about communication, as far as the social psychologist is concerned, is that it serves as the basis for social relationships of all kinds. Communication is the cement, so to speak, that binds people together in social systems: groups, cultures, communities, or whatever. Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn (1966) state that social systems can be viewed as restricted communication networks—restricted in the sense that the flow of information from one unit to another in the system is focused and channeled in order to screen out irrelevant data—"noise"—that might interfere with the message being transmitted. Herbert A. Thelen (1960) points out that if there are sixty people milling about in a large room, the total number of potential channels of communication is  $n(n-1)/2$  or 1770. However, if these sixty people are organized into a network of twelve combinations of five-man teams, with each person on a team having a clearly defined role dependent on the roles of the other four, the number of channels may be reduced in each work group to *ten*, if team members are mutually dependent, or *four* if they are arranged in a serial position. If the sixty people are organized in this way, each individual will be linked to the others by a theoretically noise-

free channel and will be able to turn his attention, without risk of distraction, to the task at hand.

Even a large group of people, like a nation, is a social system that is held together by interlocking communication networks. Stanley Milgram (1967) has showed through his "small-world" technique that in many instances an average of five or six intermediaries are sufficient to forge a communications link between any two Americans drawn at random from the national population of over 200 million. The small-world method consists of giving each member of a "starting population" a booklet with the name, address, occupation, and other identifying data of a target person, with the instruction to pass it on to a personal acquaintance he considers more likely than himself to know the target person. Each person, in turn, hands on the book in the same manner until the target is reached. Milgram found that about one-fifth of all chains eventually reached the target and that the two predominant paths were occupation and residence. In other words, if we were to start a booklet toward Joe Ortiz, a municipal garbage collector living in Tampa, we would ask ourselves what friends we knew who were involved in municipal employment or who lived in Florida.

Charles Korte and Stanley Milgram (1970) used the small-world technique in an attempt to determine the extent to which black persons were included in white acquaintanceship networks. They selected 18 target persons living in New York City, 9 white and 9 black, representing a range of occupations. Booklets were given to 540 white persons living in Los Angeles, who were unaware of the race of the targets. Of the 458 booklets that were actually started on their way, 123 (27%) arrived at the target, but there was a marked difference between races: 39% success for white targets, and 15% success for black targets. The mean number of individuals constituting the chains

did not differ with the race of the target person, but in almost 80% of the failures to reach a black target person, the booklet never left the white community.

The small-world technique thus shows that communication in even a large social system can operate with relative efficiency through acquaintanceship chains, but that the process is likely to break down at major social boundaries.

### *Communication and interpersonal behavior*

The fact that two individuals are able to communicate with each other implies that they occupy positions in some kind of a social system and also that some kind of a relationship exists between them. If they use a common language, it is also likely that they will share some percepts and may even be members of the same cultural or ethnic group. Their communication makes them a two-person group, or dyad, albeit a temporary one that may dissolve in the next instant. But for the moment they have a relationship one to the other. The relationship may be of moderate intensity, such as that between two strangers on a bus who start talking politics and find that they share the same views. Or it may be fleeting and tenuous, as between a passerby who notices a mother helping her small son across the street and hears her say: "We must look both ways before we cross, to see whether any cars are coming." In the latter instance, the communication is not even intended for the ears of the passerby, but he does pick up the message, understands it, approves of it, identifies with the mother, and finds himself looking both ways with greater than usual care as he crosses the street.

A great deal more can be learned about the woman from her brief statement to her son, other than the fact that she knows one should be careful in crossing the street. Even if we

did not observe her make this statement, but heard only a recording, we would probably assume that she was a mother (or, perhaps a teacher) and that she was talking to a child. In other words, we would be able to make some reasonably accurate assumptions about her position, role, and status with respect to her audience (the child). We would learn something about her attitudes toward the child as well as toward herself. Some of this would, of course, be revealed by her tone of voice.

The information burden of any message, therefore, may be considered in terms of its implicit, as well as its explicit, aspects. The explicit information contained in the mother's admonition to her son concerns the desirability of looking both ways before crossing the street. The implicit information is that which may be deduced from the character of the message, the tone of voice in which it is delivered, the circumstances surrounding its delivery, and the like. The status, role, position, attitude, and mood of the sender of the message are implied, rather than explicit. A communication may thus convey a number of meanings in addition to those intended by the communicator and which may strengthen or even negate the information content of the message.

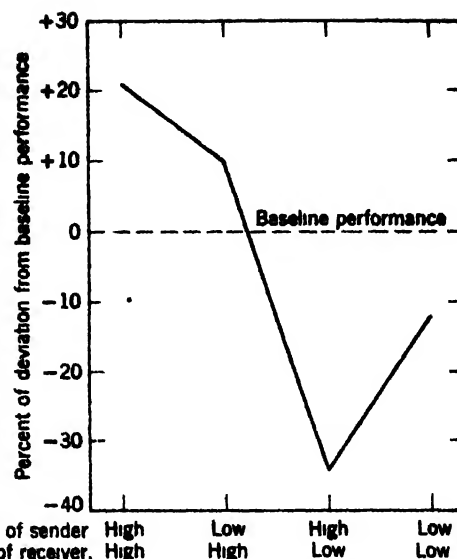
### *Communication and social status*

The communicator attends primarily to the explicit aspects of his message—the information he wishes to encode or the demand he wants to make. The audience may, however, have a high degree of interest in the *implicit* information in the message, particularly the information that reveals significant characteristics of the communicator—that says, in effect, who he is. This information is vital, because audiences generally give heed to communicators primarily in terms of who they are. Once the communicator's identity has been established, the audience will then give the

message the kind of attention they believe is appropriate for such a person. The status of the communicator is understandably important. A high-status communicator will generally be accorded more attention than one of low status.

Status influences communicative efficiency in other ways. Armand A. Alkire and his co-workers (1968) demonstrated some of these effects in an experiment in which members and pledges of a university sorority served as subjects. The subjects were grouped in dyads in which one subject was designated as a "sender" and given the task of describing a series of abstract designs to the other subject, designated as the "receiver." The receiver could see neither the sender nor the design being described, and her task was that of selecting the design being described from the array she had in front of her.

During the first stage of the experiment, no mention was made of the subjects' status in the sorority, and there was no significant difference in the performance of the four types of groups. In the second stage, however, the experimenter made a particular point of announcing that the subjects were pledges (low status) or members (high status) of the sorority. His mentioning this fact evidently had some effect on their subsequent performance. As Figure 13-3 indicates, there was a dramatic change in the communicative efficiency of the dyads, with the high-status receivers showing an improvement, relative to their baseline performance in the first phase of their experiment, and the low-status receivers showing a decline. An analysis of the tape recordings of the interchange between the partners suggests some of the reasons for the change. The low-status receivers characteristically displayed more submissive behavior by reducing the number of queries directed at the sender, a move that undoubtedly led to some bad guesses, whereas the high-status receivers, when interacting with low-status senders,



*Figure 13-3. The effect of status salience on accuracy in a communication task: percentages of improvement or deterioration in performance after experimenter had mentioned each partner's status, as contrasted with baseline performance achieved before partner's status had been mentioned (Alkire et al., 1968).*

increased the number of their queries. Furthermore, high-status senders, in communicating with low-status receivers, tended to use more abstract and technical language in describing the geometric figures, thus introducing some "noise in the channel."

The status of the partners was, of course, totally irrelevant to the task at hand, but the fact that the experimenter mentioned the status of the subjects forced them to consider it and find some way to make it relevant. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that the low-status subjects, on hearing their partner's status announced, tended to feel inferior and less adequate, whereas the high-status subjects either felt superior, if their partner was a "pledge," or more comfortable, if the partner was another member.

## Language

### *Language and social identity*

Knowledge of the status of someone who initiates communication tends to give the audience a kind of "set," that is, a certain predetermined sensitivity to the message it is receiving. A president may say something inane, but the audience, being set to hear something profound, may perceive it as profound. A child may say something profound, but if the parent is set to perceive something trivial, he may overlook the importance of what is being said.

The message, therefore, tends to reinforce whatever image the audience has of the communicator, but his image is derived from data that he previously revealed without being aware. We are referring here not only to what the communicator says and the way he says it, but also to the many other ways in which we communicate our identity—our choice of clothing, our grooming, the company we keep, our names, our gestures and expressions, and the like. Such communication works both ways, of course: the communicator reveals his identity to others and at the same time reaffirms it for himself.

An example drawn from an experience in the Middle East may help to illustrate this point. We were looking for the great Ummayyad mosque in Damascus and were making our way down a passageway in the large covered market in the oldest part of the city, looking for all the world like tourists who were not sure where they were or where they were going. A passerby, who from his clothing was obviously a local person, stopped and asked in halting French if he could help us. We started to reply, when he interrupted and asked, hopefully, "¿Habla usted español?" It was obvious that he was more comfortable in Spanish, so we switched over to that language. After he had

told us how to find the mosque, we asked him how it happened that a citizen of Syria was so fluent in Spanish. His explanation was simple and almost obvious: "I am a Sephardic Jew. My people have spoken Spanish ever since we left Spain five hundred years ago."

After the defeat of the Arabs in Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella during the fifteenth century, all non-Christians—Arabs and Jews alike—were subjected to considerable religious and economic harassment. They were, in effect, given the choice of leaving the country or of becoming Christians. Most of the Jews left to settle in lands controlled by Moslems in North Africa and the Middle East. They maintained their identity and their separateness from others through their religious practices, as reinforced by their common language, Spanish.<sup>2</sup> Although they became as fluent in Arabic or Turkish as any of the local people, they conversed with one another in Spanish. Arabic or Turkish would have done as well, as far as a medium for communication was concerned, but Spanish had the advantage of being a "mother tongue." It is in our mother tongue that we feel most at home when trying to communicate complex feelings and attitudes. Somehow the language people speak as children seems more forceful and direct, more pungent and more intimate.

To return to the Sephardic Jews, Spanish served as a means that enabled them to establish strong and intimate bonds with one another. A Jewish merchant from Tunis, when visiting in Cairo, could use Spanish to identify himself to other Jews and thus gain special consideration, protection, help, or whatever he needed. The language helped to establish a bond between him and the other members of his ethnic group. Spanish similarly enabled Jews to establish and maintain a degree of dif-

<sup>2</sup> Actually, *Ladino*, a medieval form of Spanish with some Hebrew words.



ference between them and others: Jews were people who spoke Spanish, whereas non-Jews could not speak Spanish. Communicating in Spanish, then, became a social norm characteristic of Sephardic Jews.

Of all the forms of social interaction, the language people speak is the most compelling and enduring source of cultural identity. Cultural identities and differences tend to follow linguistic lines. Major differences in customs, values, attitudes, and rituals tend to be accompanied by differences in language, and similarities in language tend to reinforce similarities in social behavior. Americans feel closer to Canada and to England than to any other countries in the world because we share a common language, whereas countries that are divided along linguistic lines, like Belgium and Nigeria, encounter continual problems in maintaining national unity because linguistic differences reinforce and accentuate cultural differences. The unification of Italy in the nineteenth century was made possible because people in various parts of the country had finally, though in some cases reluctantly, agreed to use a common dialect for communication. In more recent times, the Catalans of northeast Spain have expressed their sense of being different from other Spanish citizens, as well as their resistance to the central government, by continuing to speak, write, and publish in Catalan. German-speaking Tyroleans living in Italy use their language as a way of maintaining identity with Austrian Tyroleans and resisting attempts to integrate them into the political, economic, and cultural life of Italy.

Educational level (and social class) may also be revealed by styles of expression. One can usually tell whether a speaker is middle class or lower class by his diction, word usage, pronunciation, grammar, and the like, although differences between middle and upper class are more difficult to determine, except in certain regions of the country. Stanley C. Plog (1966)

used a literacy index to determine the status of persons writing letters to the editor of the *Boston Herald*. Letters were assigned scores on the basis of the quality of paper used, neatness, grammar and word usage, and maturity of handwriting. Estimates of the writers' probable educational levels were then made on the basis of composite scores. As Table 13-1 shows, Plog was able to predict educational level with approximately 75% accuracy. Like other forms of communication, a letter, therefore, is a source not only of explicit information (what the writer intends to communicate), but also of implicit information. The letter writer tells his audience something about himself by the paper he chooses, by his neatness, and so forth.

The importance of the style of language used by a communicator was also demonstrated by a study conducted by Triandis, Loh, and Levin

*Table 13-1. Actual Educational Level of Persons Writing Letters to the Editor of the Boston Herald, as Compared with Predictions Based on Paper Quality of Letter, Grammar, Neatness, and Graphic Maturity (Plog, 1966)*

Predicted education	Actual education		
	Grammar school	High school	College
Grammar school (Grades 1-8)	10	4	0
High school (Grades 9-12)	4	27	17
College (1-4 years)	1	8	62
N	15	39	79
Percentage of correct predictions	67%	69%	89%

(1966), who compared the relative effect of appearance and spoken English on the opinions of college students. The students listened to a tape-recorded statement that was spoken in either ungrammatical (low-status) or excellent (high-status) English. While they listened to the statement, a slide of the man who was represented as the speaker was projected on a screen for them to watch. The man was either white or Negro and was either neatly dressed or poorly dressed. The students were then asked to indicate their willingness to admire the speaker, to welcome him as a neighbor or as a relative by marriage, and to accept him as a friend. When results were analyzed, dress was found to be of least significance in determining the reactions of students. The more prejudiced of the students were most influenced by race when it came to accepting the speaker as a neighbor, relative by marriage, or a friend; otherwise, the chief basis for reacting to the speaker was the quality of his English. In fact, the kind of English used by the speaker accounted for 80% of the variance in deciding whether the speaker could be accepted as a friend, as far as politically liberal and moderate students were concerned.

### *Psycholinguistics*

The examples we have just cited show that language has a social and psychological importance that goes far beyond its more obvious tool-value—that of transmitting information from one brain to another. Because of this importance, one might think that the psychology of language structure and language-related behavior, *psycholinguistics*, should be now have become a major area of concentration in psychology. This is not so, however. The reason lies partly in the fact that language is so complex a phenomenon. As we pointed out in Chapter 1, psychologists are primarily interested in dealing with small areas of behavior, aspects that can be studied with some

precision, and have tended to leave the larger areas to sociologists and other social scientists. Another reason is that until recently there have been relatively few theories that have produced hypotheses that can be tested experimentally. Still another reason is that *linguistics*, the speciality devoted to the study of language, developed outside psychology and is more closely related to the humanities—philosophy, language instruction, and literature—than to the sciences.

Psycholinguistics is not a major area in psychology as yet, although it is a rapidly growing one. The *Psychological abstracts* for 1971 contained 23,000 entries, only 69 or 0.3% of which are identifiable as related to the field of psycholinguistics. This is, however, quite a change from 1961, when the *Abstracts* listed only 3 articles under this heading, out of a total of 7,353. Furthermore, psychologists have become interested in certain aspects of language-related behavior as it is related to their other research interests. Investigators in the field of learning and retention, for example, have found themselves involved in the relationship between language and symbolic processes in their attempts to determine what happens when we remember or forget.

Developmental psychologists have also become interested in psycholinguistics. Some years ago, there was a tendency for them to regard children's speech as just another phenomenon to be observed and recorded, but now it is apparent that it has an extremely complex and pervasive relationship to many factors in a child's development. These newer insights have come, in part, from the work of Jean Piaget in Switzerland and L. S. Vygotsky in Russia. Psycholinguistic specialists, such as George A. Miller and David McNeill (1969) are also playing leading roles in organizing, collecting, and focusing the findings of psychologists who are deeply or marginally involved in studying linguistic behavior and attempting to integrate

them with theories developed by specialists in linguistics, like Noam Chomsky. Psycholinguistics is, therefore, developing as an interdisciplinary specialty.

Dan I. Slobin (1971) has pointed out that linguists are interested in the structure of language, whereas psychologists are interested in how language is acquired and how language systems function when people speak and are understood. Psychologists, in other words, tend to be interested more in the *behavioral* aspects of language. Both structural and behavioral aspects are important in understanding language: we cannot study behavior without some idea of how the behavior is structured, and we cannot understand structure without observing behavior.

### *Generative theories of language*

Chomsky (1968) and the newer group of linguists approach the study of language in terms of *transformational generative grammar*. The rules that we use when we speak or interpret the speech of others are the grammar of the language we are using. We all know that "Men drive cars" represents a meaningful concept, but that "Men goats because" does not. The rules of our language enable us to make this judgment without hesitation, even though we would be hard put to state all the rules that make the first group of words meaningful and the second group nonsense. Whether or not we can state the rules is irrelevant, however. The point is that we collectively know how to use them. The use of these rules, furthermore, makes this phenomenon possible: each individual is capable of uttering a completely unique and sensible sentence and having it understood by others who have never heard the sentence before. If such performances were not daily and hourly occurrences, we would consider them amazing.

The grammatical structure we use and

respond to is no surface phenomenon. We are not fooled by sentences like "Houses clean clouds," sentences that superficially conform to grammatical rules but which do not make sense. As Slobin says, the central point of transformational grammar is that we are able to go beneath a sentence's surface structure and *transform* it into deeper structures that reveal its underlying meanings. The importance of deep structure is also shown by the fact that two sentences, "Men drive cars" and "Cars are driven by men," may have different surface structures and still have the same meaning.

The importance of the contributions of the newer group of language scholars is perhaps best shown by an examination of how children learn language. Common sense says that children learn the language of their culture merely by imitation; psychological learning theorists claim that they learn it by the reinforcement they receive when they happen to say something correctly. Observation of children at various stages of language development shows that imitation plays an important part (after all, children *do* eventually learn to speak like their parents), and that reinforcement is probably involved as well, but that these two theories either separately or together are not able to account for all the speech behavior that emerges.

When the child begins to utter two-word sentences—"Milk allgone," "Where Dada?," and the like—we can observe the kind of grammar he is using. Such sentences make use of what Frank Smith and George A. Miller (1966) call a *pivot word*, that is, a word that can form a sentence when used with another word. In the two examples we have given, "allgone" and "Where" are pivot words.

The individual words used in such sentences are learned from the parents or siblings. The common-sense explanation of "imitation" seems valid so far. The grammar or structure of these two-word sentences, however, is not

learned by imitation, but is generated by the child himself. The appearance of this aspect of the child's response cannot be explained either by imitation or by reinforcement. The best explanation so far is a genetic one: the child is biologically "programmed" to develop a grammar of his own that enables him to speak and be understood by others in his culture. This grammar is, of course, a temporary one and is modified as the child matures and widens the range of his experiences. Evidence that the grammar-generating mechanism may be part of a child's genetic equipment also comes from studies showing that two-word sentences, based on the use of pivot words, appear in the speech of young children in a variety of language communities other than English (Slobin, 1971).

When a child uses two-word sentences, adults generally understand and as a rule do not correct him. In effect, they reinforce him. Even when they correct him, they are likely to accept something other than standard English as an improved version. If a child asks "Where bow-wow go?," his mother, attempting to move him along to a more sophisticated mode of speech, may reply "Where *did* the bow-wow go?" If the child then restates his question "Where bow-wow did go?", she is likely to express pleasure. The point is that children are routinely reinforced for using non-standard English forms. Hence, many psycholinguists conclude that reinforcement plays a relatively minor part in language learning.

### *Language and cognition*

Another aspect of language that has drawn the attention of psychologists is the role that it plays in thinking and other cognitive functions. When we analyze a mechanical problem before tackling it, we are obviously making use of symbols to represent the tools and the processes we are contemplating. It was only logical that

psychologists should assume, as the early behaviorists did, that the symbols being used are words and that thinking is a kind of "sub-vocal speech." Enough research has been done now to show that although language forms may facilitate and extend the development of thought, they are not necessary for thinking to occur and actually may not be involved to any great extent.

Hans G. Furth (1971), for example, has reviewed a great deal of research regarding totally deaf children and has had considerable direct experience with them. He reports that most deaf children do not learn English until late in life and that in most instances they never acquire it at all. They are, however, able to communicate through gestures and signs. If words or spoken language were essential to thinking, these children would be unable to think, but evidence shows that actually they are able to solve problems quite adequately. In Furth's opinion, the research with deaf children supports Piaget's contention that language is not a constitutive element in the development of logical thinking in children, although Furth grants that use of language expands children's contacts with the social world and thus facilitates cognitive development.

Further support for Piaget comes from a study by R. Conrad (1971), who trained children aged 3 to 11 to match words and pictures. His results showed that up to about 5 years of age, speech is not used to memorize, reason, or plan. Instead, it appears to be a socially communicative way of responding to specific social situations, including the naming of objects to others. Conrad observed that some of the younger children in his research vocalized in ways that were completely irrelevant to what they were doing. One child would say "Cat goes with cat," all the while he was matching the word card for "bat" with the "bat" card. During the school years, of course, language does become integrated into our thought processes,

but the investigations we have cited suggest that it probably does not become the basic element, even in the adult years.

L. S. Vygotsky (1962) also maintains that children's speech is essentially a social development. Although children often talk to themselves (in what Piaget calls "egocentric speech"), the purpose of such behavior is to express some kind of social relationship. When Vygotsky placed a normal child in a group of deaf-and-dumb children, his spontaneous speech dropped to nothing. The same thing occurred when the child was placed among children speaking another language. Egocentric speech may help to orient a child and enable him to work through problems, but its disappearance in situations in which it cannot be used for social contact shows its essentially social nature.

It is because of questions raised by such research that Slobin (1971) is led to observe:

... the study of language acquisition has posed crucial challenges to much of traditional psychological theorizing about the nature of human development. While the issues have yet to be adequately solved, it is certain that psychology will not emerge unchanged from the coming years of debate and research. What is bound to emerge will be a more complex image of the psychological nature of man, involving complex internal structures, in part genetically determined, in part determined by the subtlety and richness of the environment provided by human culture, and probably only minimally determined by traditional sorts of reinforced stimulus-response connections [p. 61. Copyright 1971 by Scott, Foresman and Co.].

### *Language and psychological reality*

Although it is doubtful that language as such plays much part in thinking, there probably is a relationship between the reality we perceive and the language we use to describe it. The

idea that experience shapes language is consistent with common sense—we tend to report what we perceive. The reverse of this—the idea that what we say shapes what we perceive—is somewhat more startling. This latter concept goes by the name of the "Whorfian hypothesis," in honor of Benjamin Lee Whorf (1950, 1956), who gave the problems a great deal of attention. Slobin (1971) recognizes two versions of the Whorfian hypothesis: a "strong" and a "weak" form. The "strong" form, as expressed by Whorf himself, holds that language structure determines thought processes and behavior patterns and that it also serves as a kind of mold for values and other motives, as well as styles of thinking. In its "weak" form, which most linguists and anthropologists accept to some degree, the Whorfian hypothesis merely holds that certain aspects of a language may predispose people to think, feel, or act in certain ways, rather than others, but that the effect is not absolute.

One study that tested Whorfian implications consisted of a comparison of themes in stories told by bilinguals. Susan M. Ervin (1964) asked subjects who were fluent in both French and English to tell stories for standard Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) cards in both languages. She found that the stories women subjects told in English were more likely to be marked by achievement themes, and that stories told in French were more likely to portray verbal aggression and withdrawal as a way of coping with difficult interpersonal situations. Since the independent variables were the languages, it does appear that the kind of language employed by the subjects shaped their way of responding to the stimuli.

Another interpretation is in order, however: Ervin's knowledge of French and Anglo-American culture enabled her to predict the results she obtained. She predicted that women using English would produce a greater number of achievement themes, because Americans are more likely to encourage feminine achievement

than the French are, and there is much greater sex-role differentiation in France. Ervin's prediction that stories in French would show more verbal aggression was based on the fact that the French tend to admire verbal prowess and emphasize skill in argumentation in their educational programs. She anticipated the greater use of withdrawal themes in the French stories because of her observation that French families tend to deal with disagreements not so much by compromise or by mutual avowals of a desire to cooperate as by both parties withdrawing from the situation and not speaking to each other. Inasmuch as Ervin's results could have been and indeed were predicted from behavioral trends in the two cultures, it appears that the culture, rather than the language, is the main source of the observed differences in the stories.

Our previous discussions have shown how such diverse phenomena as sex roles, gestures, and values differ from one culture to another. Since the effects of culture are pervasive and extend to an almost infinite number of behavioral characteristics, it is likely that language structure is also affected. In other words, if culture may be considered as a "global" concept, it would appear that language, like other forms of interpersonal behavior, is only one aspect or dimension, albeit a very important one, of culture. As such, it implements and reflects culturally determined attitudes and values, and, conversely, helps to reinforce, sustain, and perpetuate them. Whorf came to propound his hypothesis because of difficulties encountered in translating from one language to another. This is an experience that every student of foreign languages has had. It is, for example, difficult to translate the English word "informal" into Italian. There is an Italian equivalent—*non formale*—but it does not communicate the positive values of relaxation and comfort that "informal" has in English, probably because Italian culture does not prize informality as we do, but places great stress on

form. The Italian phrase "*fare la bella figura*" is equally untranslatable. We can try to translate it by saying, "cut a good figure," "project a good image," or "put a good face on things," but such attempts, though they possess some elements of "*fare la bella figura*," do not really communicate the flavor of what Italians mean when they use the phrase. In both of these examples, the word or phrase is employed to communicate a value that is important in the culture. It is not so much that the words cannot be translated, but rather that the culture cannot be translated. Once out of context, the meanings of both the words and the idea are changed, because essential relationships are lacking and we tend to make associations that do not exist in the original language.

The evidence for the "strong" form of the Whorfian hypothesis appears to be thin. John B. Carroll and Joseph B. Casagrande (1958) undertook a test of it with Southwest Indian tribespeople, using Anglo-American subjects as controls. In one experiment, Hopis were expected to classify pictures of actions in one way, and Anglos in another, because of differences in verb structure in Hopi and English. Results showed a slight suggestion of the effect of the Whorfian hypothesis, but differences were not significant statistically. In another test, Navaho children were expected to classify objects by form, whereas Anglo children were expected to classify them by color, because the structure of Navaho verbs makes the shape of an object more salient than its other attributes, such as color. The results partially supported the hypothesis, because Navaho children who had more exposure to the Anglo-American culture made significantly fewer classifications on the basis of form than did less-acculturated Navaho children; but the Anglo children, who were expected to give the fewest responses based on form, actually gave the most.

Although the "strong" form of the Whorfian hypothesis is attractive on logical grounds, it must be questioned on the basis of supportive

evidence. Research findings and everyday experience suggest that the "weak" form of the hypothesis may have some validity. After all it would be surprising if there were *no* relationship between linguistic and perceptual phenomena. Cognitive-dissonance studies, as we noted in Chapter 7, also show that people's perceptions, attitudes, and actions are at times influenced by what they say, rather than the other way around. Because this occurs in some instances, however, it cannot be said to be universally true. In other words, to quote Slobin once more, "One is not a prisoner of one's language; it is just a guide to thought and other sorts of behavior" [p. 122].

### *Denotation and Connotation in Language*

#### *Language as a source of information and misinformation*

A language may be conceived of as a system of symbols that possess meaning by common consent. From the common-sense point of view, symbols possess meaning because they "stand for something." "*Tavola*," "*Tisch*," and "*mesa*" all stand for the class of objects we call "table" in English (and in French). This is all very simple and aboveboard, although it may be argued that each table is different from every other table in some way or other; that the characteristics of a given table change over a period of time, so that a table is not the same at one point of time as it was a moment before; and that each person's perception of a given table is different from every other person's perception (Hayakawa, 1950). There is generally little confusion about concrete objects like tables and chairs: one can point to the object in question, which usually clears up any doubt as to what the word means. In fact, it is this aspect of meaning—the "pointing to" aspect

—that is termed "denotative." The other class of meanings, those derived from the cognitive associations people are likely to make when they hear or use a word, are the ones that cause the most problems. These meanings are termed "connotative," because they are concerned not so much with the object that is specifically designated by a term, but what the term implies or suggests. The connotative meanings of a term often are more significant than the denotative ones. During the early days of the United States, captains of some ships were given "letters of marque" that permitted them to waylay merchant vessels sailing under enemy flags and to seize their cargo. These captains were called "privateers" by Americans, but the enemy probably called them "pirates" or worse. When the two words are applied to the same individuals, they may be said to be the same denotatively, but they certainly have different connotations. "Privateer" has legal and even heroic connotations, whereas "pirate" implies illegal and dastardly operations.

Real problems in meaning are encountered, however, when communication refers to abstractions, such as "peace," "socialism," and "education." The emotional charge carried by the words "peace" and "socialism" is so powerful that relatively little of their meaning is denotative. The words mean different things in different cultures and different things to different people. These are two examples of terms in which the connotative aspects of the words far exceed their denotative aspects. Even the fairly explicit word "education" creates problems. There is some agreement on the denotative aspects of the word, in that in all cultures it has something to do with teaching and learning, but in English it connotes "schooling," whereas in Latin countries it connotes "up-bringing." The problem of meaning has become further confused because the English connotations of "education" are becoming familiar to government officials and scholars in Latin

countries, with the result that the word is likely to mean somewhat different things to different people in the same culture.

What behavioral psychologists call the "frame of reference" is an important consideration in determining the meaning of a term. In the instance just cited, an Italian school administrator attending an international educational conference will use and react to *educazione* in its English sense, as referring to the result of schooling. But if he is discoursing with an Italian colleague, and reference is made to someone's *educazione*, he will understand that reference is being made to the person's manners and general deportment, which are the result, of course, of the kind of upbringing he has had. In the frame of reference used at an international conference, the word has one meaning, but in a more conventional frame of reference, it has another.

If we are preoccupied with the denotive aspects of a word, we are likely to overlook meanings that may be highly important. Consider this example. A few years ago, a black man was stopped by a policeman in a Southern town. The following then took place:

"What's your name, boy?" . . .

"Dr. Poussaint. I'm a physician . . . "

"What's your first name, boy?" . . . "

"Alvin." [Poussaint, 1967, p. 53].

Susan M. Ervin-Tripp (1969), who cites this example, notes that the feelings and the social-linguistic rules in the above interchange are obvious. We all know what a *boy* is denotatively: it is a male who is something less than a man. The word as used by the policeman has little denotative value, however, for he has chosen it for its connotative or affective value, in order to express a derogatory attitude.

Dr. Poussaint replied by mentioning his social position, pointing out that the denotation was incorrect. The fact that he was a doctor and a physician was denotatively accurate, but

he gave his title and occupation for their connotative value as well. He could have said that he was Alvin Poussaint with equal accuracy, but that would not have communicated his outrage at being addressed as "boy."

The policeman's insistence on learning Dr. Poussaint's first name is also important. Denotatively speaking, Dr. Poussaint *is* Alvin, but the use of the first name connotes familiarity and, in white-black interchanges in the traditional South, is a way of designating low social rank. Hence, according to Southern tradition, Dr. Poussaint would be addressed by a white policeman as "Alvin," whereas he would be expected to address the policeman as "Mr. Smith," or whatever.

### *The semantic differential*

The amount of affect or feeling that was attached to the word *boy* is, of course, a product of this type of situation. In other kinds of situations, *boy* might be used denotatively and have no affect at all. Or would it? Charles E. Osgood (1971) has approached the problem of meaning in a way that questions whether *any* word can be purely denotative, without any affect whatsoever. He and his co-workers have engaged in a great deal of research that shows that even the simplest words, even those that refer to concrete objects, also have an affective potential. This affective quality derives, of course, from the associations we are likely to make with them. For instance, the words *rock* and *stone* can both be used to designate a certain class of objects. Denotatively, they are quite similar, but the affective qualities of the words are different. *Rock* evokes the affective qualities of roughness, hardness, stability, and even security; *stone* evokes qualities of being rounder, more mobile, and more possibly a threat or a disturbance (gallstone, throwing stones, getting stoned).

Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum (1957) have



carried out factor analyses of the affective aspects of a large number of words and terms, in order to measure variations in their informational content. They found that about 50% of differences in meanings among words could be accounted for by three factors: evaluation, potency, and activity. These factors can, in turn, be measured by having subjects rate words on a series of scales. The *evaluation* factor of an object or word can be measured on such scales as "good-bad," "clean-dirty," and "beautiful-ugly." The *potency* factor can be measured by scales like these: "hard-soft," "rough-smooth," and "heavy-light." The *activity* factor can be measured by "fast-slow," "hot-cold," and "active-passive." Figure 13-4 represents the mean ratings of fifty-four psychology students from San Francisco State University, who were asked to rate France and the United States on nine scales. The first three scales represented the *evaluative* factor and showed that the respondents valued the two countries rather similarly, except that the United States had somewhat happier connotations for the raters than France. France is perceived as having con-

notations that are slightly, but not significantly, cleaner and fresher than the United States. The latter rates higher on the *potency* factor (the next three scales). There is no difference in "heaviness," but the United States carries connotations of strength and ruggedness to a greater extent than does France. Ratings on the last three scales show that the United States connotes more *activity* than France does for this group of subjects.

The semantic differential also has value in cross-cultural research. Malcolm M. Helper and Sol L. Garfield (1965) used it to study the process of acculturation in American Indian adolescents. The Indians, who were from various Plains tribes, were students in Flandreau School, a government boarding school serving some eighteen reservations. Students were asked to rate *Indian*, *White person*, *The future*, *Being on time*, *Planning ahead*, *Me*, *Me as I want to be*, *My mother*, *My father*, *Going home*, *Flandreau School*, *Quitting school*, *Drinking*, *Speaking English*, and *Getting mad*.

Responses were compared with those of white students attending a nearby high school.

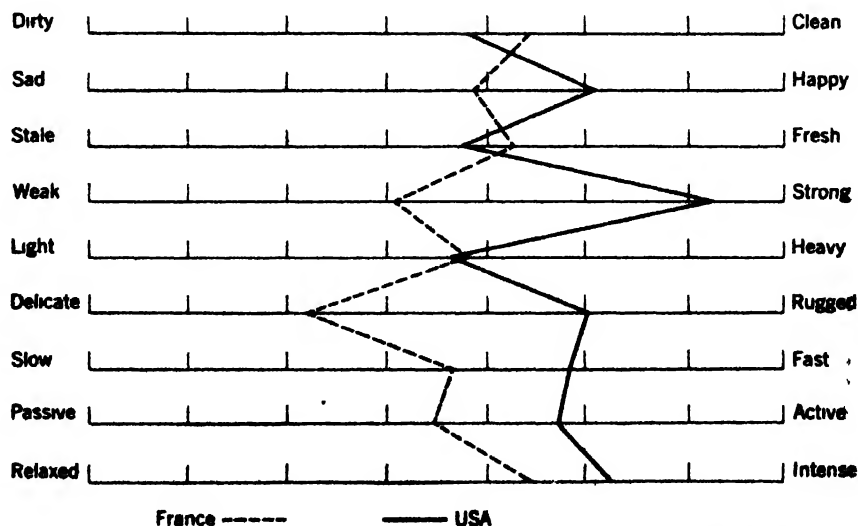


Figure 13-4. College students' rating of "France" and "USA," using the semantic differential (Lindgren, 1966).

When ratings for each of the topics were ranked according to evaluation, potency, and activity, high-achieving Indian students were found to report connotations that were more similar to white students than those reported by low-achieving Indians. In general, white students tended to assign more value to *Planning ahead*, *Being on time*, and *The future* (boys only). High-achieving Indians, when contrasted with low-achieving Indians, were more likely to assign higher ratings to *Being on time*, *Planning ahead*, *Speaking English*, and *Me* (boys only). These results suggest that white students had higher levels of need for achievement than Indian students and that achieving Indian students were more likely to identify with whites and hence had more similar views on life.

Osgood's (1971) work on what he terms *semantic space* has in recent years been concentrated on cross-cultural, or rather, cross-linguistic problems. He points out that the Whorfian hypothesis, which maintains (in its "strong" form) that the structure of the individual's language determines how he perceives, thinks, and constructs his values, precludes studies of *subjective culture* (i.e., how the members of a given culture perceive themselves, others, and the world in general). If the "strong" form of the Whorfian hypothesis were valid, each culture would be unique, and there would be no point in looking for similarities. Work with the semantic differential, however, shows that in spite of the differences that make members of one linguistic community unintelligible to those of another, there are also universals that make translation from one language to another possible and thus facilitate intelligibility.

Osgood's strategy is to find concepts with equivalents in common to 23 language communities and to have the concepts rated by respondents in each of the communities, using the semantic differential method. When the ratings are analyzed, it is possible to get a glimpse of the subjective culture of each language com-

munity in terms of the way each concept is perceived. Here, for example, are the mean ratings of the concept *adolescence* made by respondents in the American English-speaking community (AE) and by Japanese (JJ): *Evaluation*, AE 0.4, JJ 1.7; *Potency*, AE 0.4, JJ 1.1; *Activity*, AE 0.3, JJ 1.3. *Adolescence*, in other words, is perceived more positively by Japanese than by Americans and also appears to them to imply more power and action. The differences suggest that the concept of adolescence is somehow regarded more favorably and considered more important by Japanese than by Americans. Here is another glimpse: the concepts *teacher*, *education*, and *examination* are rated relatively low on the Evaluation dimension throughout language communities in the Western world, including Yugoslavia, but rate very high in Asia, from Turkey on eastward, with the sole exception of Japan. And still another: in the two language communities included from the Indian subcontinent, future-oriented words, especially *progress*, rate low in Evaluation and especially low in Power and Activity, in contrast to how they are rated in other cultures.

The semantic-differential method also permits researchers to see how closely clusters of concepts are related to one another in a given culture and to make comparisons with other cultures. These interrelationships can be expressed in terms of *semantic space*—the greater the "space" or "distance" between any two concepts in a cluster, the more difference people in a given culture perceive between them. Figure 13-5 presents diagrammatic representations of semantic space separating four interrelated concepts—*boy*, *man*, *girl*, *woman*—as perceived by respondents in four language communities: Netherlands Dutch, Delhi Hindi, American English, and Lebanese Arabic. As the diagrams show, age is not the important differentiating characteristic among the four concepts in the Netherlands, for little distance separates *boy* from *man* and *girl* from *woman*. The chief perceived difference is sex. This

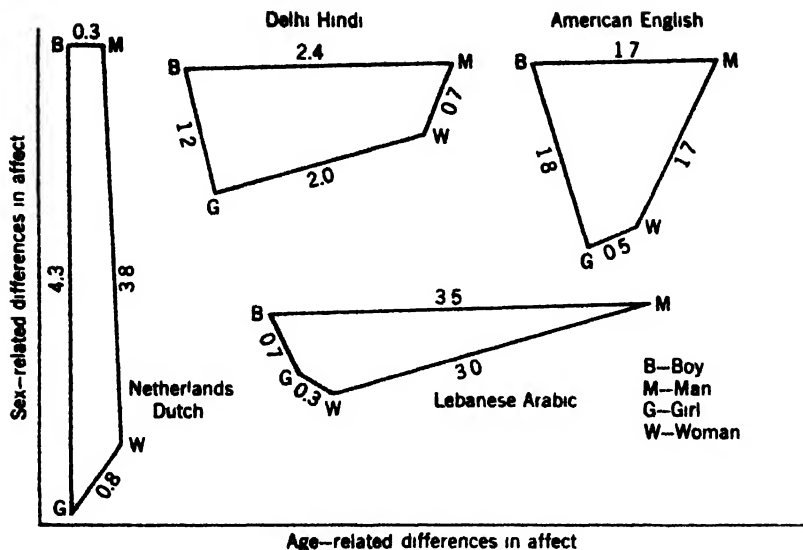


Figure 13-5. Semantic space representations of differences in affective feeling tone evoked by the concepts boy, man, girl, and woman in four language communities (after Osgood, 1971).

emphasis on sex, rather than age, is also typical of other European cultures (Swedes, Finns, Germans, French, Belgians, Italians, and Greeks), as well as of Mexicans and Iranians.

The diagram also shows that among the Hindi-speaking respondents in Delhi, the main perceived difference among the four concepts is age, and sex is relatively less important, although more so for children than for adults. To the Lebanese Arabs, *man* is considered to be quite different from *boy*, *girl*, and *woman*. The age-related difference between *boy* and *man* is as great as the sex-related difference between *man* and *woman*. Other differences are minor. In the American English community, relationships among the four concepts are more symmetrical, for age differences between the two male concepts are as great as the sex differences at both ages, although the concepts of *girl* and *woman* are perceived as closer together than *boy* and *man*.

Osgood and his colleagues are compiling data like these in an "atlas of affective mean-

ings," which will include ratings of 620 concepts made by some 500 respondents in each of the 23 language communities being sampled. The result will be a kind of cross-cultural dictionary of affective meanings that standard terms have in these cultures.

### Word-association research

Another way of measuring the affective meaning of words is that of presenting subjects with a standardized list of words, one at a time, and asking them to respond to each one with the first association that comes to mind. Although this approach has not received the grand-scale, intensive treatment that Osgood and his co-workers have given the semantic-differential approach, it has nevertheless produced some interesting findings. The most commonly used list of words is the one developed by Grace H. Kent and A. J. Rosanoff (1910) during the early part of this century. The responses to this list have been categorized and analyzed in

terms of the responses of various groups. Educated people, for example, give fewer of the "popular" responses than do people of less education. The word-association method of measuring the connotative aspects of words is more difficult to deal with statistically than are approaches that make use of the semantic differential, but it has nevertheless produced some interesting results. Robert H. Koff (1965) administered the Kent-Rosanoff list in 1963 to children aged 8 to 12 and compared their responses with those given by children in 1916. He found that over the years there was a considerable degree of shifting in the kinds of *primary* (most popular) responses given. Whereas in 1916 children's responses were markedly different from those of adults, in 1963 they were no longer significantly different. As a result of his findings, Koff raised the question of whether children today were becoming socialized earlier than in 1916.

Mark R. Rosenzweig (1961) found a number of differences between French *haut* and American college students and between students and workers, using the Kent-Rosanoff list. An analysis of primary responses of American students showed them to be more similar to American workmen, than French students were to French workers. In fact, French students' responses were closer to American students' responses than they were to the responses of French workmen. One interpretation of these differences is that the social gap between middle-class students and blue-collar workmen is considerably greater in France than it is in the United States. The fact that French workmen's use of language differs so markedly from that of students also suggests that the two groups have quite different ways of thinking and feeling about their environment. Another difference was the degree of commonality revealed by French and American responses. There was a much greater tendency for Americans, both students and workers, to use more

of the same words, that is, there was less variance and fewer interpersonal differences among their responses. This finding is consistent with other reports of a high degree of individuality and independence among French people, as contrasted with people from other countries. The greater the degree of individuality, in other words, the greater the likelihood that word associations would be unique and idiosyncratic. The responses of American subjects, on the other hand, suggested that they were more closely identified with a common culture, and that they probably shared a greater number of common frames of reference. The higher degree of commonality also supports the observation that Americans are more socially sensitive, more involved with one another, and more "other-directed" than are the French.

Still another difference found by Rosenzweig concerned similarities and differences between stimulus words and responses with respect to parts of speech. Other research has shown that adults are more inclined to give a response that is the same part of speech as the stimulus word. When given the stimulus word *sky*, for example, adults are more likely to respond with another noun, like "heaven," "clouds," or "earth." Children are more likely to respond with words other than nouns, like "blue," or "cloudy." Rosenzweig found that American students and workers and French students all tended to respond with words that were the same parts of speech as the stimulus words, as adults in other studies had done, but French workers tended to respond with words that were different parts of speech, more like children.

### *Summary*

Behavioral scientists tend to see communication as a transactional process that involves both communicator and audience, whereas

laymen tend to be preoccupied with the initial or message-sending phases of communication. Communication serves as the basis for social relationships of all kinds. A social system may be considered as a set of positions interconnected with communication channels. The kind of transaction identified as communication takes place through a series of actions in which communicators direct messages to audiences by way of transmitters, channels, and receivers. "Noise" may intervene at any point in the process to interfere with the transmission or reception of the message. The result is unanticipated variation in the content of the message received. When the receiver or audience responds to a message, he becomes a message sender and the process is reversed.

There is a tendency for message lengths in two-person conversations to be positively correlated. This may be due to the differences in the amount of tension built up in listening to long or short messages; the longer the message, the more tension in the listener, and the longer the reply. The tendency for pause lengths, as well as message lengths, to be correlated positively also suggests that the effect may be due to social learning and the normative process that occurs even in two-person groups.

According to McLuhan, certain communication media require little interpretative involvement on the part of the audience and can be considered "hot," whereas other media require more involvement and can be considered "cool." Radio would thus be considered a "hot" medium, and television, a "cool" medium. McLuhan's statement that excitable or "hot" communicators are more appropriate to "hot" media than to "cool" ones was not supported in an experiment in which an actor delivered a political speech in a "hot" or a "cool" manner over radio or television.

Attempts at communication may be guided and oriented by feedback, information available to the communicator that comes back to him

through various channels. Our monitoring of our own behavior also provides a kind of feedback that tells how we are responding to various situations. Inasmuch as there is an intimate relationship between motive and action, the two gain a certain degree of synonymy for us; and in coordinating the two, it sometimes happens that we take our cues as to how we feel from how we have acted. In other words, we come to attribute feelings to actions, rather than vice versa. This principle has been demonstrated by experiments in which subjects have received feedback in the form of false information regarding their physiological reactions to various stimuli. As a result, their attitudes toward the stimuli in question were influenced. Feedback plays an important part in empathy and also makes us available to attempts of others to influence our behavior.

Social systems are based on communicative networks, and groupings of individuals make the networks more efficient. When groups overlap or are interlocking, as they are in communities and nations, it is possible for individuals to communicate with strangers who are distant geographically and socially by sending messages through these networks.

The kind of language used by a communicator indicates his identity in terms of culture and status. Differences in status also affect the way individuals communicate with one another. Although language plays a vital role in communication, the study of language structure and language-related behavior, psycholinguistics, is not a major field in psychology, although interest in it is growing, as psychologists become aware of its importance in child development, memory and retention, and thought processes. Psycholinguistics is an interdisciplinary area of research that makes use of psychological experimentation, as well as the work of linguists like Chomsky, and developmental psychologists like Piaget and Vigotsky. Chomsky's ideas about transformational

generative grammar have been particularly challenging. Investigations conducted along these lines have led to the realization that language learning in children cannot be entirely explained by imitation or reinforcement, and that man probably is biologically organized in such a way that leads him to generate a grammatically coherent language. The idea that language and thinking are inextricably involved seems to be fallacious, as research with congenitally deaf children shows. For preschool children, language develops largely in and for social contexts. Slobin predicts that these discoveries about the nature of language will eventually lead to changes in psychologists' concept of the nature of man.

Whorf's hypothesis that the structure of the language we use determines our thinking processes and our perception of reality has received some support in its "weaker" form, namely, that it has a moderate but not major effect. Languages are systems of symbols that have both denotative (explicit) and connotative (implicit or affective) aspects. If we fall into the trap of considering only the denotative aspects of words, we run the risk of overlooking meanings that may be highly significant. The choice

of words is often based on the communicator's feelings and attitudes—his "affect"—and *what* is being denoted or pointed to is often of minor importance.

Cross-cultural comparative studies of the affective aspects of words and concepts have been conducted by Osgood and his co-workers with a rating device termed the semantic differential. They have found that about half the variance in the affective meaning of words or concepts can be classified in terms of people's perceptions of the concepts' implied value (evaluation), power (potency), and activity. Comparisons of the way members of 23 language communities react to more than a hundred concepts show interesting similarities and differences. The word-association method can also be used to study affective aspects of words. Studies using this method show that differences between adults and children have narrowed in the last fifty years and that American college students are closer in their word associations to both American workmen and to French students than the latter are to French workmen, a finding that tells us something about differences between the American and the French cultures.



*Kenneth Murray/  
Nancy Palmer  
Photo Agency*

# Chapter 14

## Group Processes

In a very real sense, communication makes groups. Groups exist because individuals communicate with one another and share motives and goals, and communication between two or more individuals makes them a group even though it be a temporary one.

The term *group* has some degree of ambiguity, because it can refer both to aggregates of individuals who do not interact, but who share some common trait, and to actively functioning groups. In the first sense, Democrats, deep-sea divers, teenagers, and even the nation's coin-operated laundromat customers can be considered as groups, because in each instance they share at least one characteristic. When we use the term *group*, to refer to such aggregates, however, we are using it largely as a descriptive category, or a



classification. The level of group awareness is likely to be low among members of this type of group. Customers of coin-operated laundromats know that they patronize such establishments, of course, but are not likely to think of themselves as a recognizable group even though manufacturers of laundromat equipment may think of them in this way.

Members of the second type of group, the *functional group*, are more likely to be aware of their group membership. Such groups include families, work groups, Boy Scout troops, church congregations, and the like. There is no limit, theoretically, to the size of classification groups; they are abstractions that exist for the convenience of people who need to make large-scale social decisions. There is a limit to the size of functional groups, however, for they exist by virtue of the interaction that takes place among their members. When we discuss groups in this chapter and the one that follows, we are using the term in reference to functional groups.

### *What makes a group?*

Two or more persons engaged in any kind of functional relationship with each other constitute a group. The members of a group may never meet: people who interact only through correspondence or through intermediaries may be considered members of a group under some circumstances. Two strangers, walking down the same street in San Francisco, side by side, are not a group as such, but when they are accosted simultaneously by a Girl Scout selling cookies, they become a group. The fact that she deals with them together makes them a group, and the fact that they are aware that they are sharing a common experience makes them a group.

Most groups studied by social psychologists endure longer than that of the two strangers approached by the Girl Scout. Groups may sur-

vive only a few minutes, as in a problem-solving group set up for experimental purposes, or they may continue beyond the lifetimes of their founding members, as for example, a monastic order.

Most of our discussion so far in this book has been concerned with the effects of social interaction on *individual* behavior, with the ways in which individuals are attracted to one another, identify with others, define boundaries between themselves and others, are stimulated by others, and the like. Social psychologists are also interested in studying groups as such. Like individuals, groups also are entities that possess characteristics and properties which can be observed, measured, classified, and predicted. Just as it is possible to specify conditions that are likely to result in certain kinds of behavior on the part of individuals, it is also possible to determine conditions that will predetermine certain kinds of behavior on the part of groups. The term "group processes" is sometimes applied to the formulations or explanations of such tendencies. "Group dynamics," a term introduced by Kurt Lewin, is also used. Both terms carry the implication that groups are to be considered as entities characterized by change and on-going activity. This is not to deny that they have certain stable characteristics that may make them appear static at times, but the implication is that their special qualities can be observed and measured in terms of the activity that takes place within their boundaries.

### *Formation and maintenance*

Groups may be formed through accidental or fortuitous means beyond the immediate control of their members or they may be formed voluntarily, as a result of mutual attraction. The two strangers who become a group when the Girl Scout asked them to buy cookies are an example of the first type of group.

Once groups have been formed, they tend

to take on certain characteristics. They are likely to develop a *structure*, whereby members have positions that stand in relationship to one another. These positions, as we pointed out in Chapter 8, are defined by the expectations that the group has for the behavior of the persons occupying these positions and that are mirrored, in turn, by the expectations that the position holders have for their own behavior. We also noted that certain attitudes and ways of perceiving tend to be associated with certain positions and to be reflected in both the role behaviors and the self-concepts of persons occupying the positions.

In a two-person group, or dyad, composed of a poll taker and a respondent, the positions are the ones indicated: poll taker and respondent. The role of the poll taker is that of asking certain questions, and the role of the respondent is that of answering them. The role behaviors are mutually understood: the respondent expects the poll taker to ask him questions, and the poll taker expects the respondent to answer them. Although these are the normal roles for the two positions, not everyone in a group will accept them. Some people refuse to answer pollsters; others ramble, do not stick to the questions asked them, and use the opportunity to express their views on a variety of subjects. But most persons polled, at least in the American middle-class culture, follow the normal procedure. Reciprocal role patterns, positions, expectations, and certain predetermined attitudes and percepts constitute the structure that gives groups a degree of stability and predictability.

### *Stability and change*

Even very informal groups have some of these qualities. A student sits down with a cup of coffee and a roll at a table in the college commons. He starts to read the college newspaper. Another student sits down with his roll and cof-

fee. They say nothing. The first continues to read the paper; the second gazes off into space while he sips his coffee. It can barely be said that they are a group. There is no interaction, yet the second student had his choice of tables. Most of the others were empty. It is a reasonable assumption that he passed by the others because he wanted some company while he ate his roll and drank his coffee. A third student arrives with coffee, toast, and a plate of scrambled eggs. He, too, was probably attracted by the existing nucleus of a group. As he begins to eat, his eye catches a headline on the back page of the paper being read by the first student. It mentions a *cause célèbre* on the campus, an instructor who is not being rehired for the forthcoming year because of his lack of research activity. The third student turns to the second, gesturing at the headline with his fork, and says, "Isn't that a dirty shame? The only real teacher on the campus and they're letting him go."

The second student says, "Maybe, although I've heard that he isn't all that good."

A discussion then develops, with the third student maintaining that the instructor has been treated unjustly and that the college is losing one of its better, more dedicated teachers. The second student continues to express his doubts. The first student puts his paper down and enters the argument, agreeing with the third student that the dismissal is unjust.

The group has not been in existence more than 15 minutes, but during that period some structure develops. The first and third students attack the college administration and defend the faculty member; the second continues to express his doubts and moves gradually to a more pro-administration position. An objective observer would note that after the first 2 or 3 minutes of interaction it becomes possible to predict the general trend of the discussion; that is, he can expect with reasonable accuracy who will attack and who will defend the faculty

member. The first and third students are more aggressive; the second, more subdued in his manner. A kind of norm develops in that the first and third interrupt the second and even each other; the second waits politely until the others are finished before making his points. Toward the end of the discussion, the third student is talking more than the first, who is talking more than the second. This development suggests that a kind of dominance hierarchy is developing.

A fourth student, carrying toast and coffee, passes by and catches the name of the instructor, lingers, and then sits down. He listens for a while, sipping his coffee and munching his toast. The newest member of any group is likely to be considered its junior, unless he displays some obvious trappings of status, in which case he may not stand on ceremony and may move into the conversation. Ordinarily, this new arrival would be considered a peer, equal in status to the others, but for the moment he is the newest and most junior member of the group.

After he has waited for what seems like a respectable period of time—say, 2 or 3 minutes—he says, "I've heard that the real reason why he is not being rehired is that he got mixed up with some New Left group."

This is new information, and, as the bearer of data hitherto unavailable to the others, the fourth student suddenly moves in status from the bottom to the top of the hierarchy. All are silent, waiting for him to continue. As he tells his story, however, the third student, who was the dominant member until the arrival of the fourth student, shows signs of impatience and finally interrupts, saying, "That's nothing new! And furthermore I don't think it has anything to do with the problem: not even the trustees think that New Left groups are radical any more!"

The new member is thus put in his place and the status quo ante is maintained.

What we have tried to show in this chain of incidents is how purely informal and volun-

tary groups, though unstable in most respects, may develop some elements of structure in a relatively short time. The members of this group have created a status hierarchy of sorts, have occupied positions, and have developed sets of expectations for one another's behavior. The structure is a loose one, to be sure, yet it does endure for a number of minutes, maintaining itself through its flexibility.

Flexibility is not enough, however. The fourth student answers the third one: "Where have you been living? I know for a fact that three instructors in my major department didn't get promoted because they made speeches for New Left groups."

The third student asks, "How do you know there weren't other reasons?" and then says he has to go to class. He picks up his books and goes off. With his departure, nothing more is said, although the fourth student is clearly in the mood to continue talking. Within a couple of minutes, the other students have finished their breakfast and have gone off. Thus the group disintegrates, almost as rapidly as it formed.

### *Social exchange theory*

The willingness of people to join, remain with, or leave a group may be explained in terms of the rewards they receive and the costs that are incurred. In effect, there is a *quid pro quo*—something is exchanged for something. The students who participated in the group we have just described joined and remained with the group in order to obtain certain rewards: the pleasant stimulation of being with others while eating, the joys attendant to having an audience, and the like. Costs of belonging to a group may be monetary, as in the case of dues that are paid in order to maintain membership in clubs and other types of associations, but they are generally of a psychological nature. John W. Thibaut and Harold H. Kelley (1959) define *costs* in terms of anything that serves to

interfere with or inhibit the performance of an action. The greater the effort that must be expended by an individual who wishes to affiliate with a group, the greater the cost of his participation. The costs may, for instance, be measured in terms of embarrassment, anxiety, irritation, or the necessity to cope with conflicting or competing needs. In the group just described, the costs of remaining in the group included willingness to listen to others, waiting one's turn to speak, refraining from angry insults, and the like. Toward the end of the life span of the group, its members had met their needs for self-expression and remembered commitments elsewhere. When costs of remaining exceed the potential rewards, the group breaks up.

Social-exchange theory, of "framework," as Thibaut and Kelley prefer to call it, assumes that the existence of any group depends on the participation and satisfaction of the individuals comprising the group. Although their formulation was specifically applied to two-person groups, it appears to be applicable to larger groups as well.

Everyone who participates in a group has in mind some kind of standard or *comparison level*, to use Thibaut and Kelley's term, which he uses as a basis for judging the costs expended and the rewards received as a result of his involvement. This comparison level may be based on his observations of other members of his group or of other similar groups. For example, let us say that Harry Channing, a college graduate in business administration, is employed as an insurance salesman. Harry is one of two college graduates in the group, the remaining salesmen having completed high school or at best one or two years of college. The district sales manager, who chairs the weekly sales meeting that all salesmen must attend, gives most of his attention to the salesmen who he feels need the most help. Harry is usually ignored, because his sales record is satisfactory, while the other college-educated salesman, whose

sales are lagging, gets much more attention. Harry is not aware of the sales manager's motives, however, and has become increasingly resentful of the treatment he is receiving. As a result, he is seriously considering leaving the company and finding some other line of work.

Harry's comparison level in this instance is based on his perception of the way in which his college-educated colleague is being treated. As far as Harry is concerned, their status is the same, yet he is the one who is ignored. His costs (irritation at being ignored, feeling of inadequacy at being rejected, and the like) have begun to exceed his rewards (satisfaction in being the member of a group, satisfaction in his sales record, and the like). The fact that Harry is considering leaving the company means that the level of outcomes in this group has dropped for him to a point where it is very close to the *comparison level for alternatives*—the term that Thibaut and Kelley employ to designate the point of reference people use in deciding whether or not to remain with a group. The costs of seeking another position involve uncertainty and the actual work involved in canvassing available opportunities. After Harry considers these costs seriously, they may seem so high as to offer no particular advantage over his present situation, unpleasant as it is. As a result, the distance between the comparison level for his present group involvement and that of the comparison level for alternatives will increase, and the present situation will appear relatively more attractive.

Walter Robert Nord (1969) views social-exchange theory as an application of economic theory to interpersonal relations. He notes that in economic exchanges, money is the reinforcer, whereas in social exchanges, the reinforcer is social approval; therefore, social approval may be considered the "money" in social exchanges. The analogy is a useful one. Just as in economic exchanges, one can use money to repay a debt or to become a creditor, so in social exchanges, social approval can per-

form a similar function. We encounter an individual we know slightly; he compliments us profusely on our appearance or something he has heard about us. Theoretically, this should "make our day," but actually, we feel somewhat awkward. Suddenly we remember some worthwhile act the acquaintance has performed and are able to return the compliment in kind. We go our way with a sense of relief at having made a successful exchange and having avoided social indebtedness.

In group contexts, social approval as far as the individual is concerned is expressed in terms of his being accepted by other members. As far as the *group* is concerned, it is expressed in terms of the individual's conformity to its norms. The group's willingness to accept is thus exchanged for the member's willingness to conform. This type of exchange is so fundamental in group life that it is difficult to imagine ourselves participating in any other way. To be sure, we may express some nonconformity at times in an effort to assert ourselves or to "test the limits," but most of the time our behavior falls into a conforming pattern without our being aware of it at all.

This intimate relationship between group acceptance and individual conformity may be involved in a number of the studies we have reported—the false-norm situations of Asch and Crutchfield, for example. In these studies, the naive subjects were undoubtedly looking to the group for some kind of confirmation of their interpretation of their environment, but that is not the point here. The point is that nonconformity evokes a feeling of discomfort, of somehow not belonging. It disturbs the balance of exchange between group acceptance and individual conformity.

### *Particularistic and universalistic resources*

Another concept that merges theories relating to economic and social exchanges is one

developed by Uriel G. Foa (1971), who has developed a classification system of interpersonal and economic resources as a way of determining what gets exchanged for what in human societies. Foa's categories consist of two he terms *particularistic*—Love and Status—and four he terms *universalistic*—Money, Information, Goods, and Services. In one of the studies conducted by Foa, each subject was given 18 cards, each bearing a message relevant to one of the six categories. The subject was then given a series of message cards. Each time the subject received a message, he was instructed to select from his stock of cards, another message that was most similar and one that was least similar to the one he had received.

Table 14-1 shows the percentages of similarity subjects perceived among the resource categories. The table is not exactly symmetrical, because subjects valued the resources somewhat differently in terms of whether they were giving or receiving them. Nevertheless, the relationship between what one is willing to give and what one wishes to get tends to be quite close. The table shows the closest similarity between love and status and the least between love and money. The table suggests, in other words, that people are highly likely to exchange status for love, or vice versa, but are less likely to consider exchanging love for money, or vice versa. Exchanges of money for goods seem more appropriate, according to the table. People are also fairly willing to give love in exchange for services received, but are less likely to give services in exchange for love received. Other low-probability exchanges are love for goods, status for goods, information for money, information for services, and information for love. Information for status, and information for goods are more probable exchanges.

Differences between these resources can be explained in part in terms of the persons who supply them to us. The nonrelationship of such resources as money and love that Foa observed

**Table 14-1.** *Perceived Similarity in Resource Categories Expressed in Percentages of Subjects Willing to Exchange One for the Other (Foa, 1971; reproduced by permission).*

Resource received	Resource returned						
	Love	Status	Information	Money	Goods	Services	Total
Love		65	10	0	2	23	100
Status	62		20	10	3	5	100
Information	17	34		11	24	14	100
Money	0	16	8		60	16	100
Goods	6	5	21	55		13	100
Services	41	18	7	16	18		100

can be accounted for in terms of the fact that money is a *universal* resource—it remains the same no matter who gives it to us. Our attitudes toward love and status, however, are *particularistic*; that is, it makes a great deal of difference to us who the donor is.

Foa has used his classification system as a basis for examining problems of modern society. High population density and increased specialization in the institutions that serve us have made it possible to exchange universalistic resources (money, services, information, goods) with relative ease, but have made it more difficult to exchange particularistic ones like love and status. "The parallel with physical environment is striking," he notes: "in both cases technology has created new problems in the process of solving old ones" [p. 350].

Difficulties have also been compounded because we have, in our social planning, tended to ignore particularistic resources. Welfare institutions, to give one example, often insist that their clients lose status in exchange for money grants. Such an exchange deprives the client of a resource that is already in scarce supply for him, and this loss makes it even more difficult to participate in social exchange with others. Another example is education—a source of information. Money can be used to

secure information, and information can be exchanged for money, but information is more closely related to status than it is to money, as Table 14-1 shows. A great deal of research shows that higher status improves educational achievement and that educational achievement is in itself a major source of status. Foa expresses the hope that the reluctance to consider the need for particularistic resources in social planning will decrease as we improve techniques for their measurement and analysis and develop a clearer understanding of the rules that govern their exchange, as well as their relationship to other resources.

## *Developmental Stages in Group Participation*

### *Infancy*

Participating as a functioning member of a multiperson group may call for a fairly complex variety of skills. The rudiments of these skills are learned in our first groups—families—and they are developed gradually, as part of a process of social learning.

The earliest social interactions are, of course, dyadic—between mother and infant. Often

both parents will interact simultaneously with the infant, but the latter can focus on only one at a time. During the first months, the nature of this interaction is rather primitive—more on a biological, than a social, level. It is not until the child begins to have some awareness of itself as a person that real social reciprocity begins. Even when children are age two or so, and they can talk a bit and interact on a largely nonverbal but nevertheless highly social way with another person, they often become confused when they must cope with two or more individuals at a time. A child may be playing happily with one parent when the other parent enters the room and says something either to the parent or the child. Often the child expresses a feeling of irritation, and not merely because of the interruption. The problem of trying to cope with the simultaneous presentation of two separate and different groups of stimuli is somewhat beyond the scope of the child's nervous system. Most children learn to deal with this problem within a few months or a year, although some accommodate themselves earlier than others.

### *Early childhood*

The classic study on the development of socializing is that done by M. L. Parten (1932) a generation ago. Parten observed the play patterns of preschool children and found that there was a definite progression by age through the sequence of solitary play, watching others play, parallel play (playing alone, but in the company of others), associative play (doing what others are doing, but not involved in a give-and-take type of activity), and cooperative play. Solitary play and parallel play were the norm between 2 and 3 years of age, with associative and cooperative play being more preferred from 3 years of age onward. As children mature, they are able to accommodate more complex forms of interaction and also

find complex forms more interesting. For the most part, however, preschool children are inclined to be individualistic and are little concerned about relating to multiperson groups as such. Very often they will pick one or two children as favored playmates, and may even play in groups of three or four, but generally they prefer more individualized activities. When children enter school, they begin to learn social skills related to functioning in larger groups, such as sitting still and listening when others are talking.

A theory linking play, fantasy, and socialization has been developed by Eric Klinger (1969). Klinger notes that play and fantasy are largely undifferentiated during the first two years of life, but then gradually become differentiated and eventually develop along parallel courses. As fantasy becomes less important, play becomes more highly socialized with respect to rules. Indeed, games and other forms of play activities serve a useful purpose in helping the child become integrated into group life and learn the rules by which society functions.

### *The school years*

By the time children enter school, their play experiences have prepared them for some aspects of group life. In their interpersonal relations, furthermore, they are beginning to show some of the behavior characteristic of members of more mature groups. An investigation by Moses H. Goldberg and Eleanor E. Maccoby (1965) tells us something about the value that groups have for children of school age. In this experiment, children were asked to build a series of towers of blocks. Each group consisted of four second graders. Some groups, termed "stable groups," kept the same members for eight trials, whereupon members were shifted to other groups. Children in other groups, termed "changing groups," were changed from one group to another every second trial during

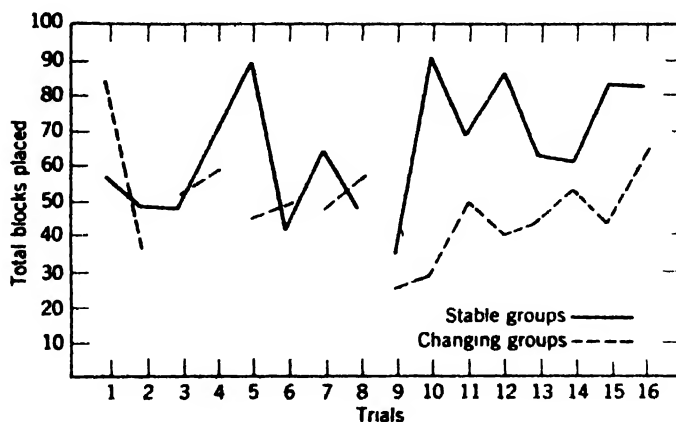
the training period of eight trials and then were observed, as were those from the stable groups, for another set of eight trials. The effectiveness of the groups was measured by the number of blocks they were able to place in the towers they built. As Figure 14-1 shows, the stable groups were more effective, both during the training period and during the testing period.

What this study shows, among other things, is the importance of secure social relationships during this developmental stage. Children are still learning the rather complicated skills of cooperation—how to work as a team, how to keep out of the way of others, how to do things that are really helpful, and how to anticipate the moves of others.

The second thing that occurs when membership in groups is changed, and this applies to adult groups as well, is that the level of tension or anxiety rises. Each change in group composition represents a new situation for members to cope with. Mature persons can accommodate the greater amount of stress more easily than children can, but the productivity even of

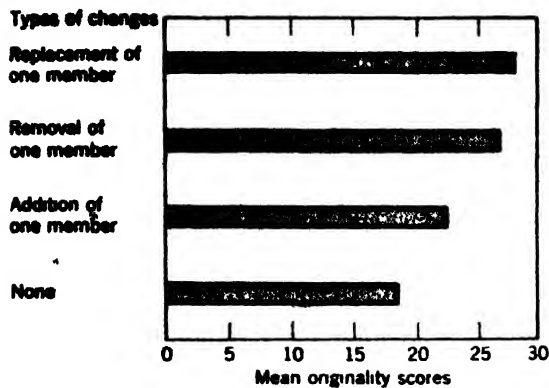
adults will often drop when a new member enters the group. Conversely, a skilled person who enters a new group will find himself operating at less than top efficiency until he becomes adjusted to the new situation.

By way of contrast, let us look at a study with adults in which changes in group composition were made from time to time. Small groups of college students were given the task of making judgments regarding the artistic merit of some drawings and estimating the number of dots on a projected slide. During this phase of the experiment, the composition of some of the groups was changed by adding, removing, or replacing a single member. All groups were then given the task of writing captions for a cartoon. When the captions were judged according to the level of creativeness displayed, it was found that groups in which changes had been made were more creative than control groups in which no changes had been made (Figure 14-2). Evidently, changes in membership had some kind of facilitative effect, as far as the production of creative responses was



**Figure 14-1.** Difference in performance between groups of second graders who were trained to build block towers in "stable groups" and "changing groups." (Goldberg & Maccoby 1965. Copyright © 1965 by the American Psychological Association.)





**Figure 14-2.** Degree of originality revealed by cartoon captions written by groups in which changes had been made during the training period, as contrasted with groups in which no changes had been made (Ziller, Behringer, & Goodchilds, 1962).

concerned (Ziller, Behringer, & Goodchilds, 1962).

Changes in group membership are likely to produce increases in the tension level. As we noted in Chapter 2, in our discussion of the relationship between arousal and performance, such arousal facilitates responses that have been well learned, but is distracting and interferes with poorly learned responses. It is reasonable to assume that the children, who have minimal skills in group functioning, were disturbed by the changes in the group, whereas the college students, who have highly developed group skills, and who were working on an easy problem anyway, found the changes stimulating.

### *Movement out of the family group*

A number of observers of developmental patterns in children and adolescents have noticed how the focus of interest begins to shift during childhood from the family to the peer group. During the preschool years, the norms, values, and attitudes of the child are those he has learned through interaction with members of his family, especially his parents. The positions

that have the greatest psychological significance for him are those he occupies within the context of his family, that is, his position as a son or a daughter, as one who plays with and keeps an eye on baby brother, and the like. As he enters school, positions and roles in the social world outside the home begin to assume more importance, and his behavior is expected to conform to norms set by groups and agencies other than the family. The norms of the peer group grow in importance for him and ordinarily reach a maximum during the adolescent years. We say "ordinarily," because some young people are less influenced by peer norms, preferring to take their cues from their family or from the adult world, whereas others become virtual prisoners of peer group norms, and never really outgrow their psychological dependence on the peer group. As children and adolescents develop and mature, they also tend to become involved in an increasing variety of groups, in which they occupy different positions and encounter and are influenced by different kinds of norms.

What we have been describing, of course, is the general pattern of social development that takes place in the American culture. Children and adolescents in other cultures tend to be less affected by peer group norms and are also likely to be involved in a smaller number of groups.

## *Cohesiveness*

### *The nature of cohesiveness*

Groups may be formed voluntarily and spontaneously because of a felt need to socialize or to accomplish some practical aim, or they may be convened by some external authority, like a school board, a legislature, or the Secretary of Defense operating through a draft board. Once members find themselves in association with one another, however, they are likely to

develop some degree of mutual attraction, as we noted in Chapter 2. The extent to which a group is found attractive by its members is termed its *cohesiveness*. Members of groups that rate high on cohesiveness find a high degree of satisfaction in being together, and little incentive is required to convene them. Groups that rate low on cohesiveness, on the other hand, must be maintained by some external pressure—penalties for nonattendance or nonparticipation, for example.

Nuclear families (families composed of parents and children) are likely to be highly cohesive, being held together by love, mutual dependence, a large number of shared experiences, and so forth. The nuclear family in America, however, tends to be less cohesive as children grow to adulthood and set up separate households. This is particularly true of males, who often keep in only tenuous touch with their parents and siblings. This occurs partly because American adult values stress independence rather than dependence on the family, and also because American families are geographically and socially mobile. European and particularly Mediterranean families are more close-knit and highly cohesive, and this is true even of extended families, or larger families composed of nuclear families that are related by birth and marriage, and that live in close proximity. Americans tend to belong to many voluntary organizations and associations, whereas Europeans do not.

Groups composed of individuals who are also members of many other groups are likely to be less cohesive than those whose members have no competing interests. This is true of groups of friends, as well as families. Kurt Lewin (1948) has noted how the behavior of Americans toward strangers is characterized by an attitude of relaxed friendliness. It is easy to strike up an acquaintanceship with an American, and just as easy to terminate it. Germans, like other Europeans, find the acquaintanceship process more difficult, but once a friend has

been made, he is a friend for life. These differences in friendship processes mean that Americans are likely to be involved in many groups of relatively low or easily terminated cohesiveness, whereas Europeans are likely to be involved in a few groups of high cohesiveness.

Groups that are convened by an external authority are less likely to be cohesive, but they may become so, if members develop or already have a strong need for association. The members of a combat team are one example. They may have been selected more or less at random by the sergeant, but their mutual need to work together to accomplish their mission and protect themselves and one another makes cohesiveness imperative. The test of cohesiveness of such groups is the extent to which they stay together when they are away from their official assignment. Such groups often "go out on the town" together and have been known to "take on" the police and to fight one another's battles on leave, in much the same way that they did on the battlefield.

Similarly, groups that are formed spontaneously may turn out to be low in cohesiveness. The group described earlier that formed around coffee in the college cafeteria is an example of such a group. Generally speaking, however, groups formed by spontaneous mutual attraction have a better chance for survival, because they are likely to be composed of people who are brought together by some perceived similarity. They are likely to share values and frames of reference, which makes it easier for them to communicate and to function as a socially satisfying group.

Cohesiveness is facilitated by a perceived similarity among persons. The more similar others appear, the easier it is to relate to them and the more socially attractive they are. Cohesiveness may also be expressed in terms of social distance. Members of highly cohesive groups feel close to one another and hence perceive little social distance separating them. People who are unwilling or unable to reduce

social distance do not become members of highly cohesive groups. Rhoda Lee Fisher (1967) studied a group of elementary school boys 6 to 13 years of age who had been placed in a special class because of their inability to adjust to regular school demands. Each boy was given eight envelopes containing different sets of two or more paper cutouts of children and adults. The boys were told to place each set of figures on a sheet of paper. The boys' perception of social distance was scored by measuring the distance between the figures. When social distance scores for this group were compared with results of children from regular classes (who were presumably having no more than the usual problems in adjustment), it was found that the emotionally disturbed children tended to place the figures farther apart. The distance among the figures placed by the disturbed children was, in turn, positively correlated with the amount of hostility and aggressiveness expressed by their mothers. Results seem to indicate that parental hostility is reflected in children's inability to think in terms of cohesive relationships among people.

### *Research with cohesiveness*

In Chapter 3 we discussed a study by Festinger, Schachter, and Back (1950) which dealt with acquaintanceship patterns that emerged in a veterans' housing unit located at a major university, shortly after World War II. One finding of the study to which we gave particular attention was that of propinquity as a major determinant in social attraction. The study also dealt with group cohesion as the result of all forces that bind people together in groups. Sociometric attraction, which we discussed in Chapter 3, is one of those forces, but cohesiveness may result from other forces as well.

A study of cohesiveness by Kurt W. Back (1951) has become a classic in social psychology research. Back tested an idea that grew out of

the 1950 study, namely, that no matter how created, group cohesion has similar properties and similar outcomes. Back observed the behavior of a number of subjects who first wrote a story based on a series of three photographs, then met together in two-person groups to discuss the story and improve on it, and finally worked alone in writing another version which was supposed to be an improvement on the first one. High and low conditions of cohesiveness were created for the two-person groups by the amount of emphasis placed on one of three conditions: *personal attraction* (the likability of the partner); *task direction* (competition for a prize); and *group prestige* (serving as a model group). Results showed that participants in the high-cohesive groups under each of the three conditions were more involved in the work of the group, attempted to influence each other more, and were at the same time more accepting of influence. There were, however, some differences among the groups, according to the condition under which they worked. When cohesiveness was based on personal attraction, group members wanted to turn the discussion into a prolonged, pleasant conversation. When cohesiveness was based on the performance of a task, group members tended to be businesslike and to participate in the discussion only to the extent necessary to achieve the goal. Under group-prestige conditions, members acted cautiously, in order not to risk damage to their status. In this situation, one member of each pair tended to assume a dominant and influential role, and the other member, a submissive one. In low-cohesive groups, members tended to act independently and made little attempt to accommodate each other.

### *Cohesiveness in work groups*

Because the need to socialize and to be with others is likely to pervade our lives and

everyday activities, group activities that have practical or instrumental values are likely to develop emotional or affective values as well. That is, even though five or six individuals have been assigned a relatively distasteful task, they are likely to find some positive reward in the fact that they are working together on something. The fact that they are assigned to the same task gives them something in common, and, as they become involved in carrying out their duties, they develop common frames of reference and share common experiences. Attribution theory can also explain the outcome, in that the members may reason somewhat along these lines: "Inasmuch as we tend to associate with people that we like, the fact that we are associating with these people must mean that we like them."

Not every work group develops a high degree of cohesiveness. Sometimes resentment against the convening or supervising authority runs so high that it interferes with the development of positive regard for group members. The fact that the authority is resented, however, does not necessarily preclude the development of cohesiveness, because group members may find themselves united in their hatred of persons in authority. In some instances, however, hostility cannot be expressed directly or indirectly toward authority figures and becomes displaced, instead, on the task itself and on other group members. This is likely to occur when some group members accept the assignment more or less willingly and others do not. The result is a low degree of cohesiveness and an ineffective performance by the group.

### *Effects of success and failure*

Psychologists have conducted a great many research studies of the relationship between cohesiveness and group effectiveness. H. Kölling (1962) observed groups of German

apprentice mechanics during a contest. Successful groups tended to be more cohesive than unsuccessful ones. In this instance, the goal of each group was winning the contest, not merely socializing, and failure led to mutual rejection. In another type of study, Benjamin B. Wolman (1960) compared three types of groups with respect to their reaction to failure. One group was organized under conditions designed to promote mutual acceptance, in that they were told that all would share equally in rewards. A second group was instrumental in character; they were told that they would be rewarded individually, but could help one another if they wished. The third group was organized along altruistic lines; they were told that their efforts were for the benefit of science and that the research was very important. No rewards were promised this group. Cohesiveness, as indicated by the members' willingness to stay in the group, was measured after the groups had encountered failure. Results showed that cohesiveness was least affected in the altruistic group and most seriously affected in the instrumental group. It appears that members of the instrumental group tended to blame one another for their failure, and very possibly held them responsible for the negative self-regard that generally results when failure occurs. In the other two groups, where mutuality was more of a factor, members felt that they had gained something from the association with others even though they had failed at the task. The fact that their social needs were satisfied to some extent enabled them to regard other members more positively, and this attitude contributed to the attractiveness (i.e., the cohesiveness) of the group.

In another type of study, girls were organized into high- and low-unity groups and given group tasks to perform. Half the groups were informed that they had succeeded at their tasks, and the other half were informed that they had failed. In the second phase of the

experiment, subjects were given tasks to perform individually. Those who had been in high-unity groups that had "succeeded" in their assignments approached the new tasks with more confidence and gave themselves high self-evaluations. Girls who had been in high-unity groups that had "failed" were less confident and rated themselves correspondingly lower. Girls in the low-unity groups were the least affected by the reported performance of their groups (Zander, Stotland, & Wolfe, 1960). The point is that a high degree of cohesiveness in a group enables and encourages members to identify themselves with the group and to become involved in the group's tasks to the point that the group's success or failure becomes their own.

### *Compatibility and cohesiveness*

The ability of people to develop harmonious relationships with one another—compatibility—is obviously related to cohesiveness. The more compatible group members are with one another, the more attractive the group will be. One study comparing the performance of groups composed of highly compatible members with that of groups composed of members possessing less compatibility found that the compatible group made fewer errors in solving problems. They also took less time, but the difference was not statistically significant (Moos & Speisman, 1962).

Compatibility is not always a boon, however, for tasks that involve competition. Joseph E. McGrath (1962) formed three-man ROTC rifle teams of students who had given favorable ratings to one another and compared their performance in a series of marksmanship contests with the performance of teams composed of students who had not rated one another favorably. The latter teams had significantly better marksmanship scores and also made more improvement during the contest. In analyzing

the results, McGrath suggested that the difference in performance might be due to the fact that the first teams were more concerned with interpersonal success, whereas the second teams were less concerned and thus could become more task-oriented. Inasmuch as members of the second teams did not care particularly for one another, they were less likely to be preoccupied with the problem of maintaining friendly relations and were able to concentrate on the task of improving their marksmanship. In effect, cohesiveness in the self-chosen teams was sustained at the expense of group effectiveness, because the drive to maintain positive group feeling worked at cross purposes to the drive to improve marksmanship.

### *Adherence to group norms*

The study by Back (1951) mentioned previously showed that increased pressures for uniformity resulted in highly cohesive groups. Conversely, the cohesiveness of a group is reflected in the extent to which members adhere to uniform patterns of behavior, or group norms. Conformity to norms is both a cause and an effect of group cohesiveness. Individuals need to become a group and to develop relationships with one another leads them to develop shared behavior patterns or norms, and their acceptance of these norms gives them a sense of unity. Members who deviate from the group norms are a threat to its cohesiveness.

A classic study by Stanley Schachter (1951) made use of discussion groups which included confederates of the experimenter among the membership. Some of the confederates were instructed to take a position diametrically opposed to that expressed by other group members and maintain it throughout the discussion. Groups were classified as high- or low-cohesive in terms of members' prior indication

of the extent to which they were interested in becoming associated with the groups. When sociometric measures were taken of the degree to which members accepted one another at the end of the discussion, the nonconformist confederates were accorded a low degree of acceptance by the members of both types of groups, but their rejection was more pronounced by members of cohesive groups. It is reasonable to assume that their deviance from the expressed norm posed more of a psychological threat to highly cohesive than to less cohesive groups.

Everyday observation of the operation of groups shows that the observance of norms is an important index to their cohesiveness. The more stringently norms are observed, the more cohesive the group is likely to be. The extent to which members are guided by group norms is an index not only to the cohesiveness of the group but to other aspects of group life as well. Ronald A. Feldman (1969) conducted a questionnaire survey of young people 8 to 16 years of age attending summer camps. All told, there were 90 groups, composed of some 800 subjects. Data included attitudes of group members toward one another and indications of normative integration—the extent to which respondents accepted the norms of their group at camp.<sup>1</sup> An analysis of the responses showed that normative integration was likely to be low in those groups in which at least one member was the focus of intense dislike. It is difficult to say which was cause and which was effect, of course. It may be that a general lack of commitment to such a group led to scapegoating and focusing dislike on certain members, or it may be that the presence of intensely disliked members prevented groups from developing

the social bonds that characterize normative integration and cohesiveness.

### *Morale*

The willingness of group members to work together is affected partly by the attractiveness of the group—cohesiveness—and partly by their confidence that their joint efforts will make some positive contribution toward their goal. This feeling of confidence and optimism with respect to problems or tasks is termed *morale*. Group morale is the composite of the morale of individual members. It is largely a function of cohesiveness; if a group is not attractive, its goals, its members, or both will be rejected. Morale may also be engendered by a sense of responsibility to the group, as well as to society in general.

### *Commitment and responsibility*

Leonard Berkowitz and Louise R. Daniels (1963) studied the performance of individuals asked to carry out various tasks in situations in which others depended on them. Subjects worked under the direction of a supervisor. Under one experimental condition, they were told that the supervisor would receive a rating based on their productivity. Other subjects were told that the supervisor's rating would *not* depend on their productivity. When some of the latter subjects were told that their supervisor would shortly learn of their performance, they worked harder than those who were told that he would not find out about their productivity until much later. The work of the first group of subjects, on the other hand, was little affected by the immediacy of the supervisor's review. The point is that the first group knew that the supervisor was depending on their doing a good job and hence did not need any special incentives to work harder. The second

<sup>1</sup>In light of what we have said about the relationship between norm-following and cohesiveness, it seems reasonable that the degree of normative integration in a group can be considered as an indirect measure of its cohesiveness.

group felt little responsibility to the supervisor, and it was only when they were told that he would be checking up on them shortly that they became more productive. If willingness to work hard is one indicator of morale, it would appear that the first group had a higher degree of morale than the second.

### *Irrelevancy of external factors*

Inasmuch as optimism and morale are positively related, it is often assumed that annoyances or difficulties away from the task situation are bound to lower morale. Evidence from field studies, however, shows that morale is more dependent on how participants view the task situation than on what happens when they are away from the task. In other words, on-the-job difficulties are more likely to affect morale than are problems encountered off the job.

During World War II, Daniel Katz and Herman Hyman (1947) studied working and living conditions for employees in two New England shipyards producing ships needed in the war effort. One yard took an average of 76 days to produce a ship, whereas the other yard took 207 days. Workers in both yards had to cope with difficult living conditions: temporary and uncomfortable housing, long commutes, bitter winter weather, inadequate recreational facilities, and resentment expressed toward the newcomers by long-time residents. An analysis of off-the-job problems showed no essential difference between the two groups of workers, but morale was significantly higher in the more efficient yard. A survey showed, for example, that only 38% of the workers in the more efficient yard had considered quitting, as contrasted with 56% in the other. Only 20% of the workers in the second yard expressed confidence in the yard's management, compared with 67% in the first. Employee dissatisfaction ran higher in the less efficient yard on almost

every criterion: production, use of worker's skills, satisfaction with use of workers' time, promotional policy, and so forth. The researchers' findings pointed to a circular causal relationship between production and morale, with good production giving workers a feeling of accomplishment, which, in turn, leads to increased effort, whereas low production reduces motivation and, in turn, leads to reduced productivity. Findings also showed that workers can deal with difficult problems off the job, as long as satisfactions at work enable them to maintain high morale. There are, of course, sound humanitarian reasons why, workers' off-the-job problems should be alleviated, but we should not fall into the trap of assuming that if authorities take steps to correct morale problems at work, such deficiencies will thereby be resolved.

### *Social Climate*

Both morale and cohesiveness are related to a third dimension of group life its emotional or social *climate*. We sometimes speak of the emotional "atmosphere" that prevails during an encounter, and may characterize it as warm or cold, accepting or hostile, tense or relaxed, or whatever. If a certain kind of atmosphere is characteristic of a certain group over an extended period of time, one can say that a certain kind of climate exists.

### *Perceptual set*

Ralph V. Exline (1957) asked groups of subjects to pretend they were vocational counselors discussing what action to take on a counselee's case. Subjects took a personality test beforehand. Half of the subjects were told that they tested high on congeniality and were being assigned to groups in which other members rated equally high on that variable. The other half were told that they rated low on congenial-

ity and probably would not find their group very congenial. When the discussion sessions were over, subjects were asked to rate the behavior of the other members of their group. Subjects in "congenial" groups were more inclined to perceive behavior that was related to the solution of the task at hand, whereas subjects in "less congenial" groups showed a slight but not significant inclination to see their partners' behavior as more concerned with personal relationships within the group. Evidently, being placed in a noncongenial group makes the task somewhat less interesting than it would have been in a congenial group.

### *The leader's effect on climate*

Exline manipulated the atmosphere of his groups by providing each with a perceptual set; that is, the members were set to anticipate a greater or lesser degree of congeniality in the group to which they were assigned. In the classic study of group climate, however, the atmosphere was determined by the leader. Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lippitt, and Ralph K. White (1939) trained leaders of boys' hobby clubs to play three different kinds of roles, which were termed "autocratic," "democratic," and "laissez-faire." When leaders were behaving autocratically, they were to plan, direct, and scrutinize the work of the boys. Communication was to take place primarily between the leader and the boys, and interaction among the boys was to be discouraged. When leaders were playing laissez-faire roles, they were to do the opposite. They were not to supervise the boys or do any planning, and were to offer opinions and help only when asked. In their democratic roles, leaders were to help the boys plan, but not to plan for them. They were to participate on an equal basis as much as possible, and to encourage communication among the boys.

Results showed that behavior patterns in the groups varied in accordance with the kind of

climate the leader created. Autocratic climates produced a great deal of work-oriented behavior, but there was a low degree of personal involvement on the part of members, because when the leader left the room, the boys tended to abandon their tasks and to become involved in horseplay and other kinds of behavior that were not task-oriented. They also became more dependent on the leader, less able to make decisions for themselves, less able to work together cooperatively, more easily discouraged, and more inclined to behave aggressively toward weaker members of the group.

Under democratic conditions, the boys did not work quite so hard, but they showed a higher degree of involvement in their tasks. When the leader left the room, for example, they were more likely to continue with it and to resist attempts to distract them. The democratic climate also appeared to encourage a greater degree of communication and cooperation among the boys, and there was no appearance of the tendency to victimize weaker members that characterized the autocratic conditions.

Under laissez-faire leadership, morale and group output were both low, and irresponsibility ran high. However, laissez-faire groups were somewhat less distractible when the leader was out of the room, because tasks had been initiated by the boys themselves.

As well as showing how the climate of a group may have a marked effect on the behavior of the members, the findings of Lewin and his associates have a number of important implications for the kinds of influence leaders may have on the groups they supervise. We shall discuss this subject at greater length in the next chapter.

### *Roles and expectations*

Climate is the result as well as the cause of the behavior of group members, and how mem-



bers play the roles that are expected of them is an important determining factor. Ewart E. Smith (1957) organized five-member problem-solving groups, each consisting of three naive subjects and two confederates who had been instructed to remain silent. In some groups the nonparticipating confederates announced that their role would be that of "listener"; in other groups no such announcement was made and the other members had no prior expectation that the confederates would remain silent. The latter groups were much less effective in problem solving. The roles played by the confederates remained ambiguous throughout the experiment, and the other members of the group did not know how to accommodate them in their problem-solving activities. Members also felt ill at ease in these groups and expressed more defensiveness than they did in groups in which confederates announced that they were going to be listeners. In control groups, in which there were no silent confederates, satisfaction with the group's activities ran higher, and there was less defensiveness. Evidently, the presence of a nonparticipant has an unsettling effect on small-group activities, even when members know that he is not going to participate. It should be noted that nonparticipation is counternorm behavior in a group that is expected to solve problems. Furthermore, it is very difficult to deal with the behavior of a member who deviates from the norm and who does not even respond to communications directed to him.

### *Types of Groups*

The behavior of group members will also be affected by the types of groups in which they function. Space limitations do not permit a discussion of the full range of group types, and we shall comment instead on a few that appear to have a more significant effect on behavior.

#### *Primary and secondary groups*

The more deeply involved we are in a group, the greater effect it is likely to have on our attitudes and behavior. Our greatest degree of personal involvement is not likely to occur in *secondary groups*, but in *primary groups*, to use the terminology developed by Charles H. Cooley (1909). Primary groups are those in which interpersonal relationships take place on a face-to-face basis and with great frequency (e.g., daily). Such relationships are likely to be on a more intimate level than relationships in groups in which there is less personal contact. The major characteristic of primary groups, according to Cooley, is the influence they have "in forming the social nature and ideals of the individual" [p. 23]. Families are the most obvious example of primary groups, but the category also includes recreational groups, work groups, and indeed any type of group in which individuals have some depth of involvement. Organizations, political parties, bureaucracies, professions, and national groups are examples of secondary groups.

Secondary groups are likely to be more impersonal and are characterized by formalized or contractual relationships among members. To use the categories of rewards developed by Foa (1971), that we mentioned earlier in our discussion of social exchange, the particularistic goals of love and status are more likely to be sought in primary-group involvement, whereas universalistic goals—money, goods, services, and information—are more likely to come through our involvement in secondary groups.

In contrast to secondary groups, primary groups demand and receive more personal involvement, and they are likely to permit wider swings in emotional tone. Love, disappointment, depression, rage, and elation are more likely to be expressed within the context of primary groups, whereas expressions of emotion to members of secondary groups are

likely to be more restrained and perhaps suppressed altogether. To put this in other words, primary groups enable us to experience our major satisfactions and dissatisfactions. Primary groups are likely to be more cohesive than secondary groups, because it is within the context of such groups that our most pressing social needs—needs for love and attention, for example—are satisfied.

### *Formal and informal groups*

Primary groups are likely to be informal, whereas formality is more often a characteristic of secondary groups. A secondary group may require a fairly complex degree of structure in order to maintain itself and to achieve its objectives, whereas too much complexity gets in the way of the functioning of small groups. Many groups that are low in structure, however, are likely to be not very stable, that is, they are likely to develop and disappear spontaneously, like the coffee-drinking group of students we described earlier in this chapter. Their membership is inclined to be less rigidly determined, and may undergo more radical changes. Structure helps make a group more stable and enables it to resist drastic changes. The formal structures of many secondary groups, like religious organizations and nations, have enabled them to survive for centuries.

### *Exclusive and inclusive groups*

Exclusive groups are those that limit membership to certain classes of individuals. Associations of engineers that admit only persons with certain kinds of professional preparation and experience are one kind of exclusive group; faculties in which membership is on an invitational basis (i.e., through being hired) are another type. Still another kind of exclusive group is the neighborhood associations that make it difficult or impossible for persons with certain ethnic characteristics (non-whites or

Jews, for example) to live in the area. Exclusiveness in the first two kinds of groups is more likely to be on a functional basis: associations of engineers exist for the purpose of enabling engineers to communicate with one another, to engage in cooperative enterprises primarily of interest to engineers, and to enforce standards of training and professional practice, among other things. It would be inappropriate for persons qualified, say, only as plumbers or sea captains to secure membership in such an organization. Faculties are composed of people who have the kind of qualifications that are consistent with scholarly undertakings. The manager of a beauty parlor might yearn for a faculty post, but a college could not fulfill its educational and scientific goals unless it limited its hiring to people with academic qualifications.

As was pointed out in previous discussions of social attraction, we tend to be attracted to people whom we perceive as similar to us. Engineers like to interact with other engineers not only because they can work better on common problems, but also because they find it easier and more satisfying to relate to other engineers than to people in other professions. One way to maintain this high degree of perceived similarity in such a group is by excluding nonengineers. Neighborhood associations are also trying to maintain a degree of psychologically comfortable similarity among residents by excluding persons from the "wrong" ethnic groups, but such criteria are less functional than those imposed by professional organizations and faculties. The right to become a member of a professional organization or a faculty can be earned, whereas the right to reside in an exclusive neighborhood cannot be earned, at least it cannot as long as society condones the exercise of "restrictive covenants," whereby residents agree not to sell or rent to "undesirable persons."

Restrictive covenants are based on the idea that some people are better or more worth-



*"I'm sorry, but this is a quintet."*

© *Saturday Review*, 1966; Peter Paul Porges

while than others, although this intent is usually denied by participants in such agreements, who claim that they are merely exercising the right to determine the people with whom they wish to associate. The point often overlooked is that such decisions are made on the basis of characteristics related to social status and caste, rather than on the social behavior and the personal values of the persons excluded. A basic question, however, is whether such exclusion is consistent with the values of the society in which it occurs. Traditional societies are likely to tolerate aristocratic values—that is, they accept the premise that some people are better than other people by reason of being born into one family rather than another. Social behavior is irrelevant to such a frame of reference, for prestige is inherited, rather than earned, in such societies. If, on the other hand, a society is governed by equalitarian values—values that base prestige and other forms of acceptability on social behavior—attempts to promulgate aristocratic values will be seen as inappropriate. It can be argued, of course, that people in a free society should be permitted to operate according to aristocratic values if they wish, but when the individuals concerned are already at or near

the top of the power structure, they exercise influence far in excess of their proportionate representation in the community and are thus in a position to block or otherwise modify the processes whereby an equalitarian society maintains and perpetuates itself.

Inclusive groups are encountered with greater frequency within the context of equalitarian societies. These are groups that open their doors to all comers and may, in fact, actively solicit memberships. Political parties, hobby clubs, and civic betterment groups are examples of inclusive groups. Unlike exclusive groups, they set no special qualifications for membership other than a sharing of interests with other members, although it is generally assumed that members accept the goals and the operating rules of the organization. The proliferation of such groups is especially noticeable in the United States. In Chapter 9 we referred to a survey in which samples of respondents in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, and Mexico were asked about their membership and involvement in organizations. As the data in Figure 9-3 showed, about two-thirds of the male respondents in the United States sample reported such membership. This pro-

portion was about the same as that reported for Great Britain, but was about 50% higher than that reported by men in Germany, Italy, and Mexico. About half the women in the United States sample said they were members of organizations, a proportion that was approximately double that of other national samples. American respondents were also more actively involved in the affairs of their organizations: one-third of the men and half of the women were or had been officers, a proportion that was much higher than that for other countries, as Figure 9-3 also showed (Almond & Verba, 1963).

### *In-group, us, and out-groups*

Any discussion of exclusiveness in groups inevitably leads to the question of in-groups. In-groups are sometimes called "we groups," in contradistinction to out-groups or "they-groups." In-groups are characterized by a strong sense of mutual identification, to the point where members feel isolated and out of place when out of the context of the group. Membership and participation in such groups is likely to evoke strong feelings of loyalty, sympathy, and devotion. Citizens of countries in which there is a strong sense of nationality are likely to think of the relationship between themselves and the people in other countries as "we" and "they." This feeling is less marked in some of the newer countries, where "we" is likely to represent the tribe or community of which one is a member, and "they" to consist of everyone else.

In recent years, "in-group" has come to be used with respect to groups that have a greater amount of power in a society. One example of such an in-group would be the families listed in the *Social register*. A small, closely knit group or clique that controls the policy of a larger group, like a political party, a church, or a corporation, may be termed an in-group in that

sense. White Anglo-Saxon Protestants are a very large in-group in American economic life. There is a tendency for in-groups to attempt to perpetuate themselves and to resist efforts of out-group members to get them to share their power. One way in which in-groups cope with the real or fancied encroachment on their rights and privileges is to increase the social distance between themselves and out-group members. This can be done by arranging matters so that in-group members seldom if ever come in contact with out-group members. In the past this was done by restrictive covenants governing housing. If out-group members are forced to live outside of one's neighborhood, the amount of possible interaction is thereby reduced. Under such conditions, out-group members can be admitted into the houses of in-group members in the role of servants, because differences in status implied by the positions of employer and servant are sufficient to keep interaction within the limits of a highly structured relationship that implies and maintains much social distance. Keeping out-group members out of certain kinds of employment also reduces the degree of social interaction, as does employing them only in subordinate positions.

There is a danger, of course, that the exclusiveness of in-groups will lead to their own undoing, and histories of ruling cliques and oligarchies are full of such examples. If groups are concerned about productivity, creativity, and general effectiveness, it would seem that the research by Ziller, Behringer, and Goodchilds (1962), that we cited earlier in this chapter, contains an important lesson, because their results imply that groups permitting changes in their membership are more effective than those whose membership is stable. A study by Robert Lee Hoffman and Norman R. F. Maier (1961) also points in this direction. These psychologists studied the problem-solving behavior of two kinds of groups, one

composed of individuals who had similar patterns of personality, as measured by the Guilford-Zimmerman Temperament Survey, and those whose personality traits varied. After observing the work of the groups for a period of two semesters, they concluded that the heterogeneous group produced higher-quality solutions. Exclusiveness tends toward homogeneity and static complacency, whereas heterogeneity seems to stimulate greater effectiveness.

### *Membership groups and reference groups*

It is obvious that groups in which we hold membership will have some effect on our behavior. Our membership in a given group is more or less contingent on our willingness to accept its norms and values. We do not have to be a member of a group in order for it to affect our behavior. As we pointed out in Chapter 4, any group that has a normative effect on our behavior is a reference group, because we refer our behavior to its standards. T. M. Newcomb's (1943) study of the effect of faculty values on the values of Bennington College students is a classic study of the effect of reference groups on behavior. In this study, Newcomb found that the liberal values of the faculty influenced students' values, as was shown by the latter's movement in a liberal direction. Similar results were found by Irvin J. Lehmann (1963), who studied the class of 1962 at Michigan State University from their freshman year onward. He found that students not only became more liberal, but also became more proficient in solving verbal problems, more receptive to new ideas, and more rational, scientific, and less stereotyped in their beliefs. The assumption is, of course, that they used the members of the faculty as a reference group in making these changes in their behavior. In social-learning terms, members of admired groups become models for imitative behavior. Similarly, we strive to eliminate from our repertory of responses anything that reminds

us of the behavior of members of groups we despise.

### *The measurement and analysis of group interaction*

In Chapter 3 we described sociometric techniques—the way in which intermember attraction can be measured. A sociogram depicts the vectors of attraction and repulsion as they exist or existed at a certain point in time. Interactional analysis, however, is concerned with the on-going processes of group behavior. One method that has had a considerable amount of use is the *Interaction Process Analysis*, developed by Robert Freed Bales (1950), a technique that can be employed to measure the extent to which participants in a discussion group play roles related to the group's task or to its social functioning. The scoring categories in Bales' system, as listed in Figure 14.5, can be used as a basis for recording all interactions, verbal and nonverbal, that take place within a group setting. The following is a sample discussion with scoring categories indicated.

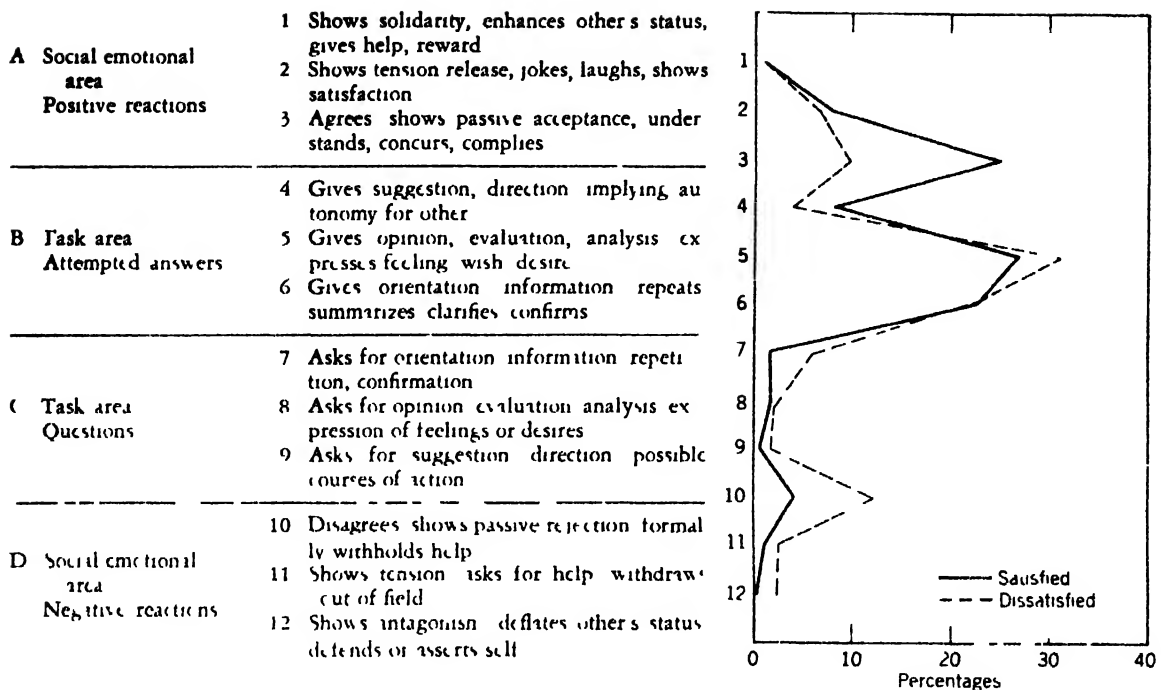
*Chairman:* There isn't enough money left in the operating fund for supplies to carry us to the end of the fiscal year. (*Gives information*) Do any of you have any suggestions as to how we might handle this? (*Asks for opinion*)

*Member 1:* Seems to me we ought to start the meeting by reading the minutes. (*Gives opinion and shows antagonism*)

*Chairman:* The secretary isn't here yet, (*Gives information*) and I thought we might get some discussion going on the shortage. (*Gives opinion*)

*Member B:* I agree. (*Gives opinion and shows*

<sup>2</sup>The most recent revision of Bales' schedule appears in his book, *Personality and interpersonal behavior* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1970), p. 92.



**Figure 14-3** Categories in the Interaction Process Analysis together with percentages of the total behavior of two case study groups, one of which was highly satisfied with its conclusions and the other very dissatisfied (after Bales, 1950, 1955)

agreement) Besides the minutes were mailed to us, and we've all seen them (Gives information)

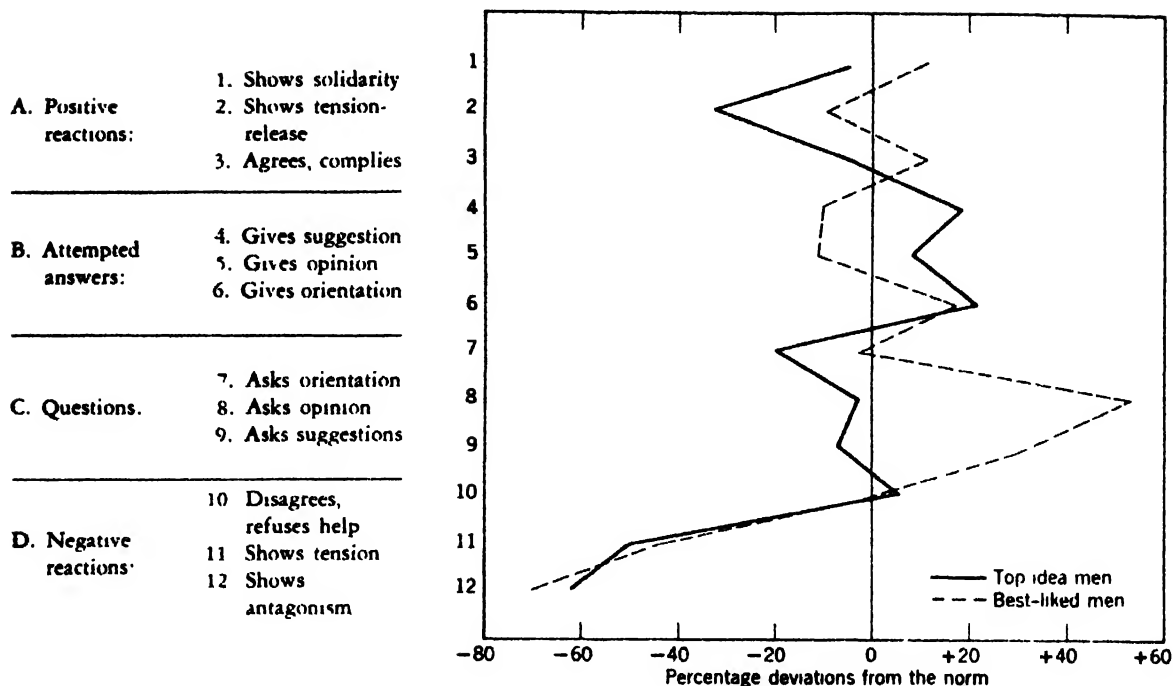
Member 1: I didn't get my copy (Shows disagreement)

As each individual makes a scorable remark, a tally is made by the observers in the appropriate column on his sheet. It is thus possible to get a record of the extent to which he participates and the kind of participation that is characteristic of him. The amount of participation is an index of his *activity* in the group. The number of tallies in Areas B and C are an indication of the extent to which the member is *task-oriented*, whereas Areas A and D provide indices to his *sociality*.

In addition to listing the categories in the Interaction Process Analysis, Figure 14-3 pre-

sents activity profiles of two five-man groups who had been given the task of analyzing a case study and making recommendations about it. One group was highly satisfied with its performance at this task, and the other was highly dissatisfied. The profiles show that members of the satisfied group engaged in more agreement and made more suggestions than did members of the dissatisfied group. They also gave fewer opinions, asked fewer questions, and showed less negative affect. There was more variation between the two groups in the social-emotional area than in the task areas. If anything, the dissatisfied group worked a little harder at their task, for they spent a little more time in task-oriented discussion.

Figure 14-4 shows how two somewhat differ-



**Figure 14-4.** Differences in interaction patterns of top men on ideas and men who were best liked by other group members, expressed in terms of percentage variations from norms representing the mean performance of all members in 96 group meetings (after Slater, 1955; Talland, 1955; and Bales, 1965).

ent types of individuals behave in discussion groups of this type. Activity profiles are presented for men who were the top idea men in their groups, but not the best liked, and for men who were the best liked, but not the top idea men. The zero reference point in the graph represents the activity of an "average" member, because it refers to the composite performance of group members over some 96 discussion sessions (Talland, 1955), whereas the types of interaction styles displayed by the idea men and the best-liked men are expressed in terms of percentage deviations from that theoretical norm. As might be expected, the idea men made more problem-solving attempts and asked fewer questions than did best-liked members or members-in-general. They were also less concerned about creating a positive

emotional climate in the group. Best-liked men were no more "supportive" than the average member, but they did spend a great deal more time asking for opinions and suggestions. Both idea and best liked men tended to avoid remarks showing antagonism or tension increase.

Bales (1965) states that he originally expected that discussion group members scoring high on likability would also score high on general activity and task ability (ideas), but his research has shown that task-oriented members tend to be the more active, and that liked members tend to be only moderately active. Furthermore, task-oriented members are not always the best-liked people. Indeed, task ability and likability appear to have a low correlation and even seem to be somewhat incompati-

ble. This was particularly true of groups that met together for an extended number of sessions. On the first meeting of the groups studied by Bales, about 56% of the members rated highest on ideas also rated highest on likability, but by the fourth meeting, top idea rankers were rated the most likable only 8% of the time. This low correlation may be due to the fact that idea men are inclined to talk a great deal and to dominate conversation. This tendency often comes to be resented by other members of the group. Bales found that about one-third of the group members he observed talked a great deal and were nonetheless liked. These were individuals who initiated a lot of interaction, that is, their talking led others to respond. The talkers who ranked lower in being liked were those who evoked a much lower degree of response.

Bales found that his groups tended to operate under a system of "dual leadership," in which one leader would play the role of the "task specialist," and another would play the role of the "social specialist." The first type of leader sees to it that the group does its job, whereas the second facilitates the attainment of the kind of social rewards that most people expect from interaction with others. The member who rates high on ideas, likability, and activity is a relatively rare person, according to Bales, and corresponds to the traditional conception of the "good leader" or "great man." Unfortunately, the opposite type—the individual who rates low in ideas, likability, and activity—is much more common.

We shall have more to say on these two styles of leadership in Chapter 16, where we examine the behavior and personal characteristics of leaders.

## Summary

Groups are made possible by communication, and attempts at communication lead to the for-

mation of groups. The term *group* may be used as a descriptive category (or classification) or in reference to an aggregate of individuals who interact in some kind of functional way. The discussion in this chapter refers to functional, rather than to classification, groups. A group consist of two or more persons in any kind of functional relationship with each other. Even informal, short-lived groups develop elements of structure, in the sense that members occupy positions, acquire status, and play roles.

Participation in groups may be explained in terms of social-exchange theory, in which the psychological rewards associated with group membership are balanced against the psychological costs of membership. The relationship between rewards and costs that a member anticipates as a result of participation in a given group serves as his comparison level, which may also be referred to his comparison level for alternatives—the reward-cost ratio he would expect in other situations available to him. Social-exchange theory is in some ways consistent with economic theory, in that social approval may be regarded as a kind of "money" that may be credited or debited. In group relations, conformity is the price of acceptance. In social systems, people exchange the interpersonal, particularistic resources of love and status, as well as the economic, universalistic resources of information, money, goods, and services. Love and status are considered by people to be most similar and hence are likely to be exchanged one for the other. Similarly, universalistic resources are considered to be similar to one another and readily exchangeable. Modern society has solved many of the problems related to exchange of universalistic resources, but has at the same time done little about particularistic resources.

During infancy and early childhood, most group relations are dyadic, but as development proceeds, children become involved in larger, more complex groups and for longer periods of time. During early years in school, children



begin to learn to use groups for cooperative action. Some degree of group stability is important at this age, and if frequent changes are made in group composition, completion of group tasks becomes less effective. Changes in composition of adult groups, however, may have a facilitative effect on performance. During the middle years of childhood, the focus of interest begins to shift from the family to the peer group, with the influence of the latter generally reaching its maximum during adolescence.

The attractiveness a group develops for its members is termed its cohesiveness. In contrast to Americans, Europeans tend to belong to fewer and more cohesive groups. Perceived similarity among members, shared values, willingness to reduce social distance, and shared frames of reference help to increase group cohesiveness. No matter how it is created, group cohesion has similar properties and similar outcomes. Work groups may become cohesive if members are able to satisfy affective needs, or if members have a common enemy, such as a supervisor. Failure can be destructive to cohesiveness in a task-oriented group, but less so in groups that are more socially oriented. Compatibility generally facilitates cohesiveness, but cohesiveness and compatibility are not necessarily conducive to group effectiveness in some kinds of tasks (e.g., under competitive conditions). A group's cohesiveness depends on the extent to which members recognize and adhere to its norms, and deviancy poses a threat to cohesiveness. A low level of norm integration in a group may be an indication of dissension and other forms of negative affect.

The morale of a group is reflected in the optimism and confidence with which its members approach their task. A feeling of responsibility to the job facilitates morale. There is a circular relationship between production and

morale, in that high morale leads to high levels of production, which, in turn result in good group feeling and optimism. Morale and cohesiveness are also related to the kind of climate that prevails in a group. The classic study conducted by Lewin, Lippitt, and White showed that the behavior of members of a group was significantly affected by changes in group climate as induced by changes in leadership style. Climate can adversely be affected if the roles played by members lack clarity and are ambiguous.

Small, intimate, face-to-face groups—primary groups—are the ones that demand and receive the highest degree of personal involvement. Our relationships with secondary groups are likely to be more impersonal and diffuse. Interpersonal relations in primary groups tend to be on an informal basis. Groups may also be exclusive or inclusive, depending on their functions and goals. Exclusivity in task groups may result from the need to have only properly qualified people as members. In socially oriented groups, exclusivity may be caused by a desire to include only people with similar interests or backgrounds. In traditional societies, exclusiveness is more likely to be based on social status than in more equalitarian societies. In the latter type of society, a relatively larger number of groups are likely to be inclusive. Exclusiveness may also foster sharp divisions between in-groups (or we-groups) and out-groups (or they-groups). The existence of such divisions reduces the opportunity for equal-status contact between members of different groups. It is not necessary to be a member of a group for it to have an effect on one's behavior. Any group whose norms are used as a reference point for behavior or the formation of attitudes and values is a reference group.

Interaction among members of face-to-face groups may be observed, recorded, and mea-

sured by Bales' interaction process analysis. Such behavior may be classified under such headings as positive or negative, problem solving, or questioning. This method of scoring makes it possible to produce profiles for each group member, showing the kind of contribu-

tion he is making to the group. Studies indicate that leadership in groups tends to center on idea men, or task specialists, and social specialists. Task groups need people in both kinds of roles, and it is relatively unusual to find an individual who can do well in both.



*Ken Heyman*

# Chapter 15

## Group Task Performance: Problem Solving, Cooperation, and Competition

People come together in groups to socialize, to get things done, or because they are required to do so. Any or all of these reasons can apply to a given group. A group that has a life span of more than a few minutes must face the need to get something done, irrespective of the motive that led to the formation of the group initially. The "something" that "needs to be done" may consist of a problem that must be solved, a task that must be carried out, or a decision that must be resolved. The issue may even be that of deciding whether to continue to the group. In this chapter we shall continue the theme of behavior in groups that we began in Chapter 14 and shall examine it in relation to the way in which groups and their members deal with tasks and/or decisions.

### *Groups versus individuals in task performance*

A fundamental question is, of course, that of whether groups actually are more efficient than individuals in getting things done. Groups are obviously better equipped to accomplish some things, particularly those that require teamwork and cooperation, but many other kinds of tasks are done better by individuals, because others would simply get in the way. There are some tasks, however, that can be done by either individuals or groups, and that are a potential source of controversy. These tasks consist of problems whose solution requires analysis, recourse to sources of information, and experience in problem solving in various contexts.

In Chapter 3 we discussed some experiments in which subjects' ability to solve problems calling for a degree of creativity or ingenuity was tested under group-discussion (brainstorming) conditions and under conditions of working alone. These studies, taken as a whole, showed that performance was superior when subjects worked alone, but that participation in brainstorming tended to facilitate subsequent individual performance (Taylor, Berry, & Block, 1958; Dunnette, Campbell, & Jaastad, 1963; Lindgren & Lindgren, 1965a, 1965b). All these studies concerned tasks involving what J. P. Guilford (1959) has termed "divergent thinking," in that the subject is given a problem situation and is expected to create as many different solutions as possible. Another type of problem calls for "convergent thinking." Such problems have a limited number (usually only one) of appropriate solutions, and the subject is expected to examine the elements in the problem situation, discard some and use others, and thus "converge" on the correct solution. Convergent problems lend themselves more readily to experimental situations, because it is easier to measure performance and to evaluate results.

The question of whether groups or individuals are superior in problem solving was studied by an experiment conducted by Jacob Tuckman and Irving Lorge (1962), who asked Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps cadets at Columbia College and Manhattan College to work on a task known as the "Mined Road Problem." This problem is one of a number developed by the Office of Strategic Services (1948) for use in selecting special agents during World War II and involves a complicated series of tasks which would be hazardous if carried out in a real-life situation. The cadets were directed to solve it with paper and pencil. Briefly, the problem is that of five men trying to escape from enemy territory, who have to cross a road that has been mined with supersensitive mines that cannot be neutralized, detonated, or dug up. The most elegant solution consists of their using various items lying around, building a bridge over the road, and removing traces of their escape route. The poorest solutions consist of actions that in real life would have led to the death or capture of members of the team.

Tuckman and Lorge set up two different conditions for the experiment. In the experimental condition, individuals worked alone in studying the problem and in writing up what they considered to be the best solution. The following day, the same subjects were organized randomly into five-man groups, given the same problem, and asked to solve the problem again as a group. Under the control condition, groups of five cadets were given the same problem and asked to solve it as a group, without their having seen or worked on it beforehand.

The individuals working alone produced solutions that were inferior to those produced by the groups, and there was little difference in the quality of the solutions produced by the experimental or the control groups. Comparison of the performance of the experimental groups with that of the individual members

who had worked alone the previous day showed that the groups producing the best solutions were composed of members whose previous (individual) performance was quite good. In fact, there was a positive correlation of .54 between the solutions of groups and the previous solutions of their best single members. The investigators concluded that the superiority of the group was due to the greater probability of finding adequate solutions. In other words, five sources of solutions were found to be better than one. They also noted that although the groups were more efficient than individuals working separately, the groups as a whole were actually rather inefficient. They tended to form cliques or subgroups that worked independently, with one clique attempting to convince the other of the soundness of its approach. At least one individual in most groups did not participate at all, and in several groups the discussion was dominated by a single member, who tried to coerce the other members into accepting his solution.

#### *Improving the functioning of groups through democratic leadership*

The observations of Tuckman and Lorge suggest that the groups would have been more effective if the efforts of members had been coordinated by proper leadership. The effect of using trained leaders was studied by Norman R.F. Maier (1950), who compared the performance of problem-solving groups led by individuals trained in democratic procedures with that of groups led by untrained individuals. The problem contained some distracting features that led the majority of the subjects to give an incorrect answer. As in the Tuckman-Lorge study, subjects first worked on the problem alone and then discussed it in groups. Results showed that groups headed by trained leaders were more likely to produce correct solutions. Maier explained these results in

terms of his observation that leaders trained in democratic processes saw to it that everyone in the group had a chance to make a contribution. Since the members who had arrived at the right answer were in the minority, it was important that this minority be heard if the group were to be helped to find the right answer. Nontrained leaders were less likely to recognize and protect the rights of minorities in their groups, whereas trained leaders restrained the more aggressive and domineering members and saw to it that minorities had a proper hearing.

#### *Improving the functioning of groups through structure*

The functioning of groups can also be facilitated when positions and roles are well defined. Groups cannot function effectively without some kind of structure, and *ad hoc* groups, like those created for the Tuckman and Lorge experiment, have difficulties in proceeding with their task until they have achieved some understanding of who will lead and who will follow. Structure is even more important in groups that must not only solve problems, but must also carry out their decisions.

The importance of structure in such groups is indicated by a study conducted by William T. Smelser (1961), who made use of an ingenious type of problem involving the operation of a model railroad, a technique that had been developed by Edwin E. Ghiselli and Thomas Martin Lodahl (1958). Smelser assigned teams of two subjects the task of running two trains in opposite directions around a circular single track. Each subject had a control panel that he could use to regulate the speed and direction of his train and to shunt it onto sidings to let the other train pass. The performance of the team was measured by the number of successful round trips made by both trains during 3-minute trials.

The subjects in this experiment consisted of students who had scored either very high or very low on a test measuring personality characteristics associated with tendencies to be socially dominant. Subjects were assigned to two-person groups organized according to different patterns or structures. In Type A groups, for example, a subject scoring high on the test (high dominant) would be assigned the task of dispatcher—that of making the final decisions in running the railroad—and a subject scoring low (low dominant) would be given the subordinate role. Type B groups consisted of a high-dominant and a low-dominant subject, but there were no instructions as to who would be the dispatcher. In another type of group, a low-dominant subject would be assigned the role of dispatcher, and a high-dominant subject would be given the subordinate role. There were in all seven different types of group patterns, with varying combinations of position assignments and personality types.

Smelser's results showed that assigning one person a dominant role and the other a subordinate tended to produce superior results, as long as the personality patterns of both subjects were not inconsistent with their roles. The best performance was turned out by the groups in which high-dominant individuals were placed in dominant roles, and low-dominant individuals in subordinate roles. Groups composed of low-dominant people in dominant roles and high-dominant people in subordinate roles did the poorest. Holding the latter group apart as a special case, the results showed that the assignment of roles did aid the functioning of the groups, since such groups did better than those in which no assignments were made. Experience also facilitated the performance of groups. Each group ran through six 3-minute trials. The greatest differences among the types of groups appeared during the first trial, but five trials later, all groups had improved, and there was little difference between the best and

the poorest group. In other words, even those groups composed of individuals whose personality traits were incompatible with their assigned roles were capable of learning how to use the structure imposed on them.

The model-railroad method was also employed by Edwin E. Ghiselli (1966), who assigned the same task used by Smelser to teams of three and four subjects. Inasmuch as such a task calls for skillful timing, the ability to learn a complex set of electrical relays, and the capacity to anticipate fast-moving events, common sense might lead one to predict that the more intelligent the team, the better its score. Results showed that the more intelligent teams did indeed perform more effectively during the early trials, but intelligence had negligible effect during the middle phase and appeared to be actually detrimental during the final phase.

One might assume also that people who like to work in groups (as contrasted with those preferring to work alone) would be more likely to contribute to the success of such teams, but Ghiselli found that this dimension of personality interfered with success during the early trials and was a negligible factor thereafter.

The best predictor of performance during the second and third phases of the experiment was what Ghiselli called "skewness" on a Decision-Making Scale, a test measuring personality characteristics related to decision making. This scale consisted of pairs of adjectives that top-management and middle-management personnel tended to react to differently when asked to select adjectives that best described them. A high score on the scale is typical of individuals who resemble top-management people in terms of their attitude toward decision making—that is, they tend to perceive themselves as active, self-reliant, confident in social relations, straightforward, and dignified. Middle-management people tend to see themselves as careful planners, thoughtful, seldom

making rash decisions, and avoiding the appearance of being controversial persons or of exhibiting self-centered behavior. Teams composed entirely of members who scored high on this scale, however, were actually somewhat less effective in running the railroad than teams scoring low. The teams with *one person* who scored significantly higher on the Decision-Making Scale than the other members of the team, however, were the ones who did the best during the second and third phases of the experiment. The greater the similarity of the team members on the Decision-Making variable, the less effective the team. In other words, groups with a single member who was uncontested as a self-confident decision maker did the best, after the initial learning stages.

It seems to be a reasonable assumption that personality traits associated with decision making are also associated with dominance. If so, some of Smelser's results appear to be consistent with those of Ghiselli. In both studies, unstructured groups containing one person scoring high on these traits turned in superior performances during early trials. In such instances, the high-dominant (or decision-making) individual very likely took over the management of the operation, structured the group, and assigned subordinate roles to the rest of the team. Ghiselli's results also seem consistent with those of Tuckman and Lorge, in that in both instances a preliminary measure of ability was positively correlated with performance. In the Tuckman-Lorge study, the preliminary measure was the score made on the problem solution written alone, which was found to correlate positively with group performance; in the Ghiselli study, the measure was a test of intelligence, which was found to correlate positively with performance during the first or learning stage of the experiment. Inasmuch as the Tuckman-Lorge study consisted of only a single group problem-solving session, and did not go into additional phases, we have

no basis for comparing the two studies beyond that point.

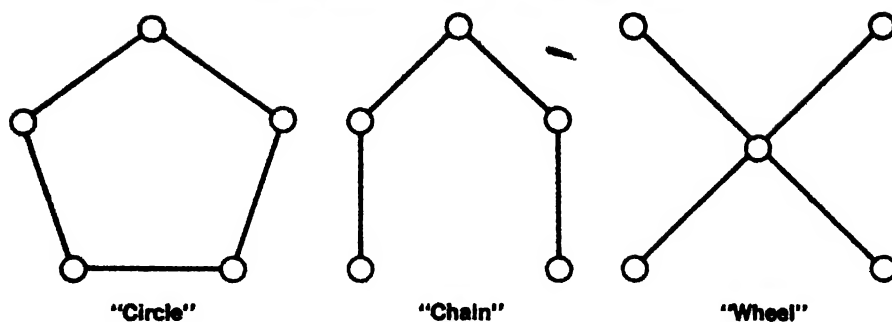
### *Centralized and Decentralized Group Structure*

The research discussed up to this point suggests that there are at least two factors related to the effectiveness of groups concerned with problem solving: (1) the structure of the group (the appropriateness of the participants' roles and the clarity with which they are perceived) and (2) the characteristics of the members (intelligence, analytical ability, personality traits). We now turn our attention to another group of studies also concerned with the structure of problem-solving groups, but with particular emphasis on the effect that channels of communication have on performance.

As noted in Chapter 13, any social system can be perceived as a restricted communication network—restricted in the sense that communication is not diffuse and random, but is channeled between specified positions in the network. These restrictions limit individual freedom, but at the same time they reduce interference ("noise" in the channel) and enable the system to function efficiently. The way in which communication is channeled may affect the efficiency of the organization, as well as the kinds of satisfactions that people will receive as a result of their participation.

Alexander Bavelas (1950) and Harold J. Leavitt (1951) conducted a series of experiments using various arrangements of communication channels with problem-solving groups, each composed of five subjects. Figure 15-1 depicts the three main types of communication networks used in their research. The circles represent positions in the communication nets, and the lines represent the open channels. Subjects placed in the positions indicated could communicate only in writing and only to the





Characteristic	Circle	Chain	Wheel
<i>Speed</i>	Slow	Fast	Very fast
<i>Accuracy</i>	Poor	Good	Very good
<i>Organization</i>	No stable form	Slowly emerging but stable	Almost immediate and stable
<i>Emergence of leader</i>	None	Marked	Very pronounced
<i>Adaptation to sudden changes in task</i>	Very good	Poor	Poor
<i>Morale</i>	Good	Poor	Very poor

**Figure 15-1.** *Characteristics of three kinds of five-man, problem-solving groups (after Bavelas & Barrett, 1951).*

persons to whom they were connected by channels. The "wheel" type of arrangement, with its central, coordinating position, was found to be the most efficient. It rated high in speed and accuracy and produced a stable organization almost immediately. Participants had little doubt who the leader was: he was the individual occupying the central position. The wheel formation, therefore, represents the traditional, autocratic or authoritarian type of organization. The leader is in complete control, members can communicate only to him, and he can communicate to anyone he pleases. He is free, but they are not. Only he can make decisions, because he has all the information.

The "chain" arrangement is basically the "wheel" modified into an organization containing three hierarchies instead of two. Like the "wheel," it is an autocratic structure. The leader

is obviously the person in the center, but the subjects at each end have no contact with him and do not know what his powers are. They communicate only with the persons between them and the center, who may be the leaders, as far as they know. These intermediate leaders know that the center man is the leader, and he knows it, too. In some ways this arrangement represents a pyramidal feudal hierarchy, with each person swearing fealty and owing allegiance to his next highest superior. This network was relatively efficient for solving problems; the organization emerged slowly, but was stable.

The "circle" arrangement is the most "democratic" of the three types. Each position is equal in power, and any leadership that emerges comes by virtue of other qualities than the position occupied. This network was the

least efficient. It developed no stable organization form, and members could not agree who the leader was.

When it came to flexibility, however, the circle was markedly superior. It could adapt itself to changes in task more readily than could the other two types. This finding is reminiscent of the results of the classic experiment conducted by Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) using experimental social climates in boys' clubs. In that experiment mentioned (in Chapter 11), the autocratic climate was found to be slightly more efficient, but the democratic and laissez-faire groups continued work when the leader was out of the room and were better able to resist distraction and criticism when a "janitor" entered the room, presumably to fix the lights. The autocratic groups, on the other hand, were more likely to "fall apart" and to engage in horseplay.

The other significant finding in the research by Bavelas and Leavitt concerns morale. Persons occupying central positions in the "wheel" and "chain" nets reported themselves as being satisfied with the groups' activities, but those on the periphery were dissatisfied. Persons in the "circle," however, were uniformly satisfied.

Further research with small groups raises

some questions on the extent to which the findings of Bavelas and Leavitt regarding group efficiency can be generalized. Marvin E. Shaw (1964) reviewed a number of such studies, including some of his own (1954), and concluded that whereas centralized groups, like the wheel, are more efficient with simpler problems, decentralized groups, like the circle, are more efficient with complex problems. The results of his survey, as summarized in Table 15-1, show that centralized groups are superior to decentralized groups in speed and avoidance of errors, but only with simple problems. In every other instance, decentralized groups are superior.

In centralized groups, individuals occupying key positions have a considerable degree of autonomy and are relatively independent. This leaves them free to solve simple problems quickly and to coordinate the flow of limited amounts of information. With complex problems, however, the amount of information is greatly increased and the person in the central position becomes saturated with data. Coordinating the communication of information and making the necessary decisions becomes much more involved. Individuals occupying positions in the circle, although they send and receive

**Table 15-1.** *Summarized Results of Experiments Comparing Centralized (wheel, chain, etc.) Groups with Decentralized (circle, etc.) Groups with Respect to Performance and Outcome in Dealing with Simple and Complex Problems (after Shaw, 1964)*

Variable	Type of problem	
	Simple	Complex
Speed	× (78%) <sup>a</sup>	◇ (100%) <sup>a</sup>
Number of messages sent	◇ (100%)	◇ ( 95%)
Avoidance of errors	× (100%) <sup>b</sup>	◇ ( 83%) <sup>b</sup>
Satisfaction of participants	◇ ( 88%)	◇ ( 89%)

<sup>a</sup>Symbols represent the type of group that is most often reported as rating higher on the variable indicated. × is the symbol for centralized types of groups; ◇ is the symbol for decentralized groups. The figures after each symbol represent the percentages of studies that report favorable results for the type of group indicated.

<sup>b</sup>Excludes four studies in which no differences were found between the groups.

many more messages than do individuals on the periphery of the wheel, are less likely to become saturated with information and better able to deal with whatever data they have or receive.

Shaw (1971) notes that in natural situations, the tasks that groups are faced with are likely to be more complex than the most complex task used in laboratory experiments. Hence, it would appear that decentralized networks of communication would be even more effective than they are in the laboratory in dealing with real-life problems.

Shaw's (1954) studies were challenged by Mauk Mulder (1960), who conducted experiments using complex problems with four-man circle and wheel groups. Although circles were more effective during the first two out of five problems, wheels surpassed the performance of circles during the last three problems. Mulder interpreted these results as indicating that centralized group structures are better than decentralized ones in decision making, irrespective of whether problems are simple or complex. The fact that decentralized groups appear to have an advantage with complex problems during early trials merely indicates, according to Mulder, that it takes longer for a structure of working relationships and roles to emerge in centralized groups. Although Shaw and Mulder were using similar data, they came to contradictory conclusions, and more research is obviously needed to resolve their differences.

One study that shows results consistent with Shaw's interpretations was conducted by Roby, Nicol, and Farrell (1963), who studied the speed of problem solving of four-man teams of airmen. Half the teams were organized according to a centralized structure, with responsibility centered in one team member. The other half were organized according to a decentralized structure, with responsibility shared equally by all members. The centralized groups were more efficient with problems calling for coordination of action among group

members, but the groups with decentralized structure were more efficient with problems requiring members to deal with environmental changes. Their findings thus suggest that decentralized groups are more flexible and readily adaptable to novel situations.

The effect of reinforcement on group performance was studied by Robert L. Burgess (1969), who used four-person groups organized as wheels or circles, working on relatively simple problems. Groups that were positively reinforced were told that if they speeded up, they would be permitted to quit early; negative reinforcement consisted of punishment for errors in the form of the sounding of a raucous buzzer and the shutdown of the communications equipment for 15 seconds. The performance of the wheel groups in the nonreinforcement condition was consistent with the findings of other researchers: they worked faster than the circle groups and reached a peak state of efficiency more rapidly. Under reinforcement conditions, however, there was no difference in the effectiveness of the two types of groups, and circle groups actually showed improvement. Burgess argued that the introduction of reinforcement made the experiment more natural, because in real-life situations groups are rewarded for adequate solutions and penalized for errors. His research thus suggests that even for simple problems decentralized groups can be as efficient as centralized groups under conditions that approach reality. It appears that decentralized groups are better able to respond to feedback in the form of positive and negative reinforcement, while centralized groups, being less flexible, find such feedback distracting.

### *The Risky Shift*

We move now from the consideration of laboratory studies dealing with problems calling for "convergent" strategies to a type of study dealing with problems that have a number of

possible solutions. This type of research is not concerned so much with what kind of structure is the most efficient, but rather with how people behave in the contexts of groups concerned with decision making.

For some time, both social psychologists and laymen have assumed that people tend to be more conservative in group contexts than they are away from the group, and that groups have the effect of moderating or dampening innovation, creativity, and daring. The first suggestion that this assumed effect may not always apply came from the thesis of a candidate for the master's degree at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the early 1960's. The investigator, J. A. F. Stoner (1961), found, contrary to conventional wisdom, that individuals in some situations come to advocate *higher* degrees of risk following group discussion than they had previously advocated in private. Inasmuch as group participants shifted their judgments toward greater risk, the phenomenon has been termed the *risky shift*.

The investigations that have reproduced the risky shift phenomenon have usually made use of materials in which subjects read about hypothetical individuals who must choose between a safe but otherwise unattractive alternative and one that is attractive on a number of counts, but which exposes the chooser to a much higher possibility of failure. A typical example would be the dilemma faced by an electrical engineer who has a modest but adequate salary, and who has been offered a position that pays a much higher potential income but has no guarantee for long-range security. Subjects are asked to indicate initially the minimum odds for success (number of chances out of 100) they would find acceptable before recommending that the engineer take the new job.

The subjects are then convened in a group which proceeds to consider each of the hypothetical situations through open-ended discussion. Following the discussion, they are

again asked as individuals to indicate their recommendations. The typical finding is that subjects accept a higher degree of risk than they did before the discussion began—that is, they recommend accepting alternatives at lower odds for success than they did earlier.

An experiment conducted by Neil Vidmar (1970) is typical of risky-shift investigations, except that Vidmar took the additional precaution of pretesting his subjects and assigning them to groups composed of high-, medium-, and low-risk takers. A mixed group was also composed of subjects representing all three levels of risk-taking preferences.

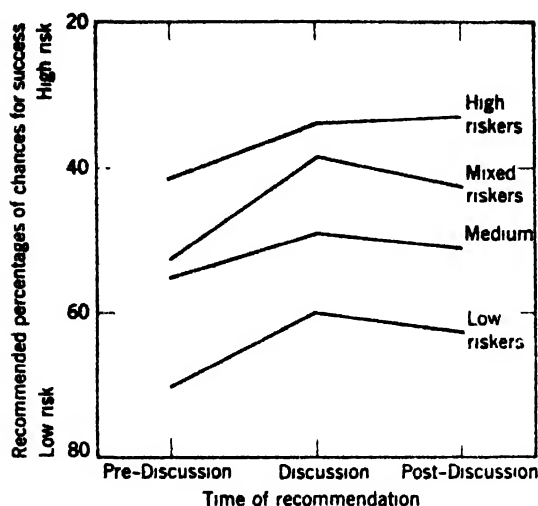
Once in the groups, the subjects were asked to discuss each hypothetical situation and arrive at a consensus (not merely a majority) as to the minimum odds in favor of success that they would use as a basis for recommending that an individual choose the risky option. After the group discussion, the subjects once again indicated their preferred risk level.

Figure 15-2 shows Vidmar's results. *All* groups showed the risky shift phenomenon. Subjects in the mixed group showed the greatest overall change, while the second greatest amount of change was demonstrated by members of the low-risk groups.

There are four explanations for the risky shift phenomenon that have been put forth by psychologists. The diffusion-of-risk hypothesis holds that "an individual in a context of group discussion feels less personal responsibility for failure in the pursuit of risky options than he would feel if deciding it alone" [Kogan & Wallach, 1967; p. 261]. The idea here is that members come to feel that their decisions are shared partly by the group, a feeling that is facilitated by affective bonds between members.

The leadership hypothesis holds that risk-prone individuals are likely to be more talkative and persuasive than those who prefer low risks.

The familiarization hypothesis holds that the risky shift is more apparent than real, that it seems to occur because subjects have not had



**Figure 15-2.** Mean risk choices in terms of percentages of recommended chances for success of high, medium, low, and mixed groups of subjects before, during, and after group discussion (Vidmar, 1970).

sufficient time to think about the problems during the prediscussion testing, but that during the discussion phase they have a better chance to study the possibilities in the situation. The idea is that individuals working alone will also show the risky shift, if they are given enough time.

A fourth hypothesis has been put forth by Roger Brown (1965), who has speculated that the phenomenon is the result of cultural values which favor risk rather than caution. Brown believes that most people think that they are *as* risky as, or even *more* risky than, other people. In the course of the group discussion, however, they find that there are others who are even more risky than they are, and they are forced to revalue their views. The tendency, of course, is for them to realign their position in terms of the riskier norms enunciated by the group.

Vidmar's findings tend to support Brown's cultural-value hypothesis, as do the results of

most of the recent investigations of this phenomenon (Clark, 1971; Willems & Clark, 1971). This hypothesis accounts for the fact that all types of subjects shifted in the risky direction, and that those in the mixed group shifted the most. The diffusion-of-risk and the familiarization hypotheses cannot account for the differences among the groups. The leadership hypothesis would account for the behavior of the mixed group, but cannot account for the shift in the low-risk group, which lacked any high-risk, influential leaders.

At the present moment of writing, risky-shift research is more suggestive than conclusive. It does not test any major theories, but it does raise some interesting questions about group-decision processes. There is a possibility that the risky shift may be related to such phenomena as the increased creativity that group brainstorming produces as an after-effect. Although Brown's explanation suggests that risky shifts are culture-bound, this conclusion has yet to be tested in cross-cultural research.

The risky shift may also be specific to the kinds of problems that are being posed in the experiments and that may not occur in other contexts. Zajonc, Wolosin, and Wolosin (1972) conducted a gambling experiment designed to test risk-taking in which subjects first wagered individually. Some then wagered in groups of three, while others continued their individual wagering. Results with both individuals and groups showed a decrease in riskiness, not an increase.

In another set of experiments, students from two different ethnic groups at the University of Hawaii made the typical risky shift (about 7%), but only when the usual mimeographed versions of the hypothetical situations were used. When the stimulus materials consisted of the same hypothetical situations presented by actors on soundtape, the risky shift dropped to only 3.6%. Videotaped stimulus materials reduced the shift to 2%, as long as the stimulus

person was a member of the *other* ethnic group, but when he was a member of the *same* ethnic group as the subjects, there was a mean shift in the *conservative* direction of almost 9% (Levit & Saville, 1971). It may be that the risky shift occurs only when subjects feel detached and personally uninvolved in the outcome.

## Cooperation and Competition

### Formalized cooperation

Much of what we accomplish as individuals and as groups depends on our ability to get others to work with us on common tasks and for mutually acceptable goals. This is true at all levels of group functioning, irrespective of whether the groups are centralized or decentralized, or whether they are working on simple or complex problems. What we are referring to is the process known as *cooperation*—working together for mutually acceptable goals. The goals of the cooperators need not be identical, but achieving them must result in satisfaction for all parties concerned. Cooperation may involve merely our participation in a set of mutually understood role behaviors. We enter the post office to mail a package. We hand the package to the postal clerk who weighs it, computes the postage, and tells us how much it will be. We hand him some money; he affixes the postage and gives us back our change.

What we have just described is a series of cooperative actions, each one initiating and being initiated by the role behaviors of the persons occupying the positions of post office patron and postal clerk. Handing the parcel to the clerk was the signal for him to begin an appropriate sequence of role behaviors. His completion of this sequence led us to give him some money, which started him on another segment of behavior. We are satisfied because we

were able to send the package off by mail, and he is satisfied because he performed the service for which he was employed. In this instance, his satisfaction is a reflection of our satisfaction.

This interaction between us and the postal clerk represents, as we said, cooperation on a rather simple level. The mutual expectations and the resulting behaviors are all spelled out by custom and culture. In such instances, no one has to do anything creative, ingenious, imaginative, or out of the ordinary in any way.

The kind of cooperation that takes place between individuals occupying positions of unequal power and status actually amounts to obedience or compliance. It is similar to the cooperative interaction we have just described because it depends heavily on the roles prescribed for the participants. The role of the supervisor calls for him to order, demand, or request compliance, and the role of the subordinate calls for him to obey. Some argue that such an arrangement is not really cooperation, because cooperation implies a relationship between people who are relatively equal in status, or who are equal as far as a particular situation is concerned. In the post-office incident, it does not matter who the patron *really* is (who he is when he is not playing the role of the patron); to all intents and purposes, patron and postal clerk are equal and are mutually dependent. In a situation where there is an authority figure and a subordinate, the former may *talk* about getting cooperation, but he may mean obedience and compliance. To be sure, there are many kinds of arrangements between the supervisor and the supervised in which the power of the former is severely limited, either by the way in which the situation is formulated or by the existence of a democratic atmosphere, in which event the demands of the supervisor are made in the form of requests and are treated as such. In more authoritarian settings, however, there is no doubt that obedience and compliance are what pass for "cooperation."

*Cooperation in problem-solving groups*

Cooperation at a more advanced level may take place in problem-solving situations—situations that have a relatively high degree of ambiguity and a low degree of structure or predictability. Under such conditions, conventional roles and status levels are of little value and may actually interfere with the problem-solving processes. Most of the research conducted by psychologists into the nature of cooperative processes deals with situations of this type and takes place among subjects who are equal in status.

Many of these studies contrast cooperative with competitive behavior. Cooperation, as we have said, involves mutual goals, but competition is concerned with personal goals. In competition, individuals try to secure a greater-than-equal share of the rewards available to members of the group. In the usual type of experiment, this gain can be made only at the expense of others, although in everyday situations this is not always true. For example, Robert, usually a high-B student, feels challenged and even somewhat irritated by Elsa, a straight-A student who is in the same seminar with him. To compete with her, he does extra reading, writes and delivers an especially good paper, and consequently gets an A. Elsa also gets her A, and the other students in the seminar get their usual grades, so nobody loses. There is always the risk, of course, of encountering a professor who grades "strictly on the curve," but such is not usual in seminars, student folklore to the contrary notwithstanding.

Common-sense attitudes toward competition are based on the traditional idea that there is only a fixed quantity available for use or distribution of the "good things in life"—economic advantages, comfort, fame, happiness, and the like. This idea leads to the further assumption that individual betterment and progress can come only at the expense of others. Your success, in other words, automatically means loss and deprivation for me. This

concept plays an important part in the value and belief systems of peasant cultures throughout the world, as anthropologist George M. Foster (1967) points out, but it also has a strong appeal to many in urbanized, industrial societies, particularly to members of the lower classes. Modern economic theory, however, looks upon wealth as an entity that may be expanded by an investment of time, money, and energy in productive activity. Societies in which an Ache tends to run high are likely to be both economically productive and competitive, although government controls are often found necessary to keep competition within reasonable limits, on the one hand, and to ensure that enough competition does, in fact, take place, on the other. Antimonopoly legislation is an example of the latter type of control.

One of the classic studies of competition was conducted by Alexander Mintz (1951) who displayed a glass jar that contained a number of paper cones to groups of 15 to 21 subjects. Any one of the cones could be removed from the jar by pulling on a string that was tied to its peak and thus drawing string and cone through the opening at the top of the jar. It was not possible to remove more than one cone at a time, because they jammed in the neck of the jar (see Figure 15-3). After a few tries, the subjects were able to remove all the cones from the jar by taking turns and not getting in one another's way—in other words, by cooperating. The bottom of the jar was connected to a source of water which gradually filled the bottle, thus adding a note of stress—it was imperative to remove the cones before they came in contact with the water. The subjects who had learned to cooperate, however, learned to perform their tasks efficiently, in spite of this distraction. When Mintz changed the rules and offered any subject a cash reward if he could get his cone out of the bottle before it got wet, subjects who had previously encountered little difficulty in getting their cones out of the jar dry now encountered great problems.



*Figure 15-3. Cross-section of a glass jar used in the cooperation-competition experiment, showing two cones in a "traffic jam" at the neck of the cone (Mintz, 1951).*

In twelve out of sixteen trials under reward conditions, "traffic jams" developed in the neck of the bottle. In three of the remaining trials in which participants succeeded, they refused the rewards, thus suggesting that they had not really regarded the situation as a competitive one.

Mintz conducted this series of experiments because of his interest in the behavior of crowds in panic situations, as, for example, a fire in a theater. Loss of life in such situations can be avoided if people behave cooperatively, but, instead, a sense of panic sweeps over the crowd, and people become preoccupied with their own survival. Mintz considered his competitive situation to be analogous to panic conditions, because participants were concerned only about their own welfare to the exclusion of any consideration for others. Under such conditions, cooperative behavior was not perceived by the subjects as rewarding. The fact that they had learned to function cooperatively

in previous trials now became irrelevant, and their intense preoccupation with their own welfare prevented their adopting the self-disciplines basic to cooperative endeavor.

A number of other researchers have found that competition leads to a higher level of performance than does cooperation. For example, Richard deCharms (1957) tested groups of subjects under conditions in which they were either rewarded equally (cooperative) or according to their achievement (competitive). Although he introduced a number of other variables not relevant to our present discussion, the results showed that the performance of each of the competitive groups exceeded that of each of the cooperative groups. One of the differences, however, between the deCharms study and that of Mintz, is that the former consisted of individual tasks that were merely divided among the group members, whereas the efforts of the groups in the Mintz study were interdependent.

An attempt to resolve some of the contradiction in the results of various studies of cooperations and competition was made by L. Keith Miller and Robert L. Hamblin (1963), who reviewed the literature on this subject and conducted a study of their own. They examined twenty-four different studies and noted that systems of differential rewards (which lead to competition) generally had a detrimental effect on performance in studies where interdependence among group members was essential to the completion of the task. This was true, for example, of the Mintz (1951) study. In studies where there was low task interdependence, however, like that of deCharms, differential rewards usually led to a heightened degree of group productivity.

To test the generality of this finding, the researchers set up a series of problems to be solved by three subjects each working in an isolated booth connected to other booths by an electrical system of lights and switches. The task was to determine which one of thirteen

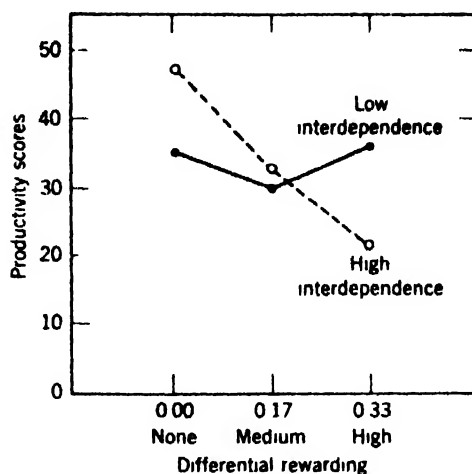


numbers the experimenter had selected. Each participant had a different set of four numbers that the experimenter had *not* selected; hence, a pooling of the data revealed the correct answer. In the high-interdependence situation, guessing was not permitted, and subjects were forced to cooperate to solve the problem. In the low-interdependence situation, there was no restriction on guessing, and cooperation was hence less valuable. In the two differential reward conditions, rewards were determined by the rank order in which the group members solved the problems, with the speediest member receiving more points than the other members. In the equally rewarded situation, the members got the same reward, irrespective of individual differences in their speed in solving the problem.

The results, as depicted in Figure 15-4, supported one of the hypotheses derived from their analysis of the research literature. Under the high-interdependence condition, rewarding individual members on the basis of their performance interfered with the productivity of the group. However, differential rewards under conditions of low interdependence had little effect on performance.

The fact that Miller and Hamblin were unable to show a relationship between facilitated performance and productivity does not necessarily contradict the results of deCharms' study, the two studies used different tasks and cannot be considered as comparable. The Miller-Hamblin study does demonstrate, however, that competition interferes with performance when the roles of members working on a task are interdependent. The question of whether competition aids or deters the productivity of groups working on other types of tasks remains open.

In a complex experiment in which pairs of subjects had the option of cooperating or working individually, elements of risk were introduced by permitting them to take some of each



**Figure 15-4.** Differences in group productivity resulting from various degrees of individual differences in rewarding under low- and high-interdependence conditions (Miller & Hamblin, 1963). Productivity scores represent 90 less the average time in seconds per solution under each of the conditions. The productivity curves show that, under conditions in which group members are highly dependent on one another, the greater the difference in individual rewards, the poorer the performance. Where team members are only minimally dependent on one another (low interdependence condition), individual differences in rewarding have little effect.

others' earnings. Results showed that cooperation between the pairs diminished considerably even when the risk was small, when the risk was large, disruption of cooperative behavior was total (Marwell, Schmitt, & Shotola, 1971).

### *Cooperation, competition, and group feeling*

Productivity is not the only measure of group effectiveness. Inasmuch as people are attracted to groups in order to satisfy social needs, how

members feel about the groups in which they participate is an important consideration.

One study of such feelings was conducted by Robert E. Dunn and Morton Goldman (1966), who asked subjects to work on problems that could be solved through group-discussion methods. Some of the groups were told that the members would be rewarded individually; others were told that they would be rewarded as a total group. Some of the groups were in competition with other groups; others were not. Results showed that members found the experience more satisfying when rewards were shared equally. Furthermore, members of noncompetitive groups expressed more liking for one another than did members of competitive groups. The authors took issue with the common assumption that introducing competition among groups induces cohesiveness and "good in-group feeling," and interpreted their study as suggesting that such rivalry may not only be unnecessary but may also do social harm through arousing intergroup tensions.

The results of Dunn and Goldman's study appear to be contradicted by the findings of Julian, Bishop, and Fiedler (1966), who studied the morale of Army combat engineering squads. Nine squads were involved in intergroup competition in the conduct of their training and garrison duties; eighteen squads were not. Questionnaire measures of interpersonal relations and personal adjustment were administered before and after the three months' period of experimentation. Results showed that the competing soldiers showed gains in self-esteem, emotional adjustment, and adjustment to Army life, in contrast to the other soldiers, most of whom showed some deterioration on these variables. The members of competing squads also made significantly lower scores on a measure of anxiety and were more accepting of one another as work partners. The researchers concluded that under some condi-

tions, intergroup competition could have a quasitherapeutic effect on the participants.

It may well be that the difference in results reported in the studies by Dunn and Goldman and by Julian et al. is due to the kind of task involved. Dunn and Goldman were observing the behavior of college students working for brief periods in an unfamiliar situation on the solution of problems, an activity that is likely to have a high degree of intrinsic interest value, whereas Julian, Bishop, and Fiedler were studying the behavior of military personnel working over an extended period of time on tasks that probably could be characterized as repetitive, monotonous, and boring. It is quite possible that competition was "riskier" and thus made the tasks more interesting for the service personnel and hence improved their morale, but that it interfered with the performance of the college students who were trying to cope with a novel situation. Thus the differences between the two types of results may be another instance of the inverted-U relationship between stress and performance (Hebb, 1955a).

Some support for this idea may be found in a study that showed that subjects working in discussion groups under competitive conditions reported more satisfaction with their tasks, even though problems were solved more efficiently under cooperative conditions. The experimenter, Marvin E. Shaw (1958), concluded that competitive situations arouse stronger motivation to achieve (*n Ach*) than do cooperative situations, but that this stronger motivation may actually interfere with performance on certain tasks and thus result in poorer scores. Such results suggest that if motivation is a factor in getting people to work on tasks, it may be worthwhile to introduce competition to get people "involved," even at the risk of some loss of efficiency. If production is an important goal, an unmotivated, cooperative group would be less effective than a more highly motivated, competitive group.

In real-life situations, however, employees are likely to be well aware of the motivating power of competition and often set up defenses in the form of group sanctions against members who permit themselves to become involved in competition. "Gold-bricking" and "goofing off" are terms applied to normative behavior aimed at resisting the efforts of management to get workers involved in competition, and those workers who do compete in spite of group norms are called "ratebreakers" or "rate busters" by their fellow employees. We have noted this phenomenon previously and will discuss it further in Chapter 17.

One reason why workers resist the introduction of competitive measures is that under such conditions they are likely to become ego-involved in their work, because each individual realizes that he is "on trial" as an individual and others will judge him by his performance. And, what is probably even more important, he will be led to judge himself accordingly.

Traditional societies are likely to be less competitive than urban, industrial societies. Behavior in such societies tends to be more formalized according to position and status, whereas the members of urban, industrial societies, oriented as they are toward middle-class values, must earn the positions and status they occupy. Life in urbanized societies offers many opportunities, large and small, to prove oneself competitively. Interestingly enough, such societies also offer a greater number of opportunities to function cooperatively in non-prescribed situations—for example, in group problem solving. Life in urban, industrial societies is full of ambiguous problems without clear and easy answers, whereas life in traditional societies presents relatively fewer problems and provides answers for all or most of them. There is thus a greater need in urbanized societies for a democratic type of problem solving in which all participants have equal status—the kind of problem situation that

psychologists use as a basis for their experimentation.

Today we are much concerned about involving people throughout the world in large-scale problem solving. The problems of the world—health, education, peace and war, preservation of the ecology, allocation of scarce resources—cannot be solved by individual people or individual nations. They can be solved only by cooperation and collaboration.

It is interesting, if perhaps ironic, that the most competitive societies also generate the most equal-status cooperation.

### *Cooperation and Competition in Two-Person Games*

#### *Nonzero-sum games*

The most recent attempts by psychologists to study cooperation and competition have made use of what are termed nonzero-sum or Prisoner's Dilemma games. The term Prisoner's Dilemma comes from a standard conflict situation that is used in some of the research studies. This hypothetical situation concerns two criminals who are arrested and questioned separately by the police. Each is informed that if he will give evidence that will convict the other, he will be freed. The prisoners know that if neither gives evidence, there will not be enough to convict them and they will go free. On the other hand, if *both* give evidence against the other, they will be convicted, but the sentence will be lighter. If a prisoner is loyal and cooperates with his colleague, he will refuse to give evidence, but since he does not know what his colleague will do, he is tempted to behave defensively and give the evidence demanded. Because of this conflict, such games are also referred to as *mixed-motive games*.

Prisoner's dilemma games are termed nonzero-sum games to differentiate them from

"zero-sum games," which are the typical parlor games, like casino or dominoes, where one player wins whatever the other person loses. The only sensible approach to zero-sum games is to play them competitively, since that is the only way to win.

Nonzero-sum games (mentioned briefly at the end of Chapter 10) are more complex. In general, mutual cooperation will lead to modest gains for both players, mutual competition will lead to losses for both, and attempts to cooperate on the part of one player, when coupled with a competitive move by the other player, will lead to a major gain by the competitive player and a minor gain (or a loss) by the cooperative one.

In a typical game, players sit in different rooms and press buttons to signal their choices, with results announced to them after both have chosen. Figure 15-5 depicts a payoff matrix for such a game. It can be seen that it is in the best long-range interest of both A and B to choose the left alternative, because they both will win 6c. However, A will be tempted to choose the right-hand alternative, because he stands a chance of winning 7c and causing his opponent to win only 4c. This will work, however, only if B has chosen the left alternative, because if B has chosen the right-hand alternative, they both lose 1c. Choosing the left alternative is a cooperative choice, because it enables both sides to win a modest amount, but if one opponent makes this cooperative

gesture and the other has simultaneously made a competitive one, the would-be cooperator comes off second best and the exploitive competitor wins.

The payoff matrix depicted in Figure 15-5 is one that calls for cooperative behavior if participants are to make any headway. Research using this payoff matrix, however, shows that participants cooperate only about 50% of the time. Even with other matrices that make cooperative behavior more rewarding, participants are unable to engage in cooperative responses more than 53% of the time. When subjects were playing with a simulated player who cooperated 100% of the time, their responses were cooperative only 38% of the time (Minas, Scodel, Marlowe, & Rawson, 1960). Such results would seem to raise a question about the common assumption that cooperation breeds cooperation. However, another study by Bixenstine and Wilson (1963) showed that when the simulated partner's choices changed from a less cooperative to a more cooperative strategy in the middle of a series of games, there was a tendency for players to increase their percentage of cooperative responses as well. Even in such instances, the cooperativeness of players did not exceed 60%, although the simulated opponent was making 95% cooperative responses. One pair of investigators found that the best way for a would-be cooperative player to secure cooperation from the other player is not through maintaining a completely cooperative stance, but through matching—meeting a cooperative response with a cooperative one, and a competitive response with a competitive one (Whitworth & Lucker, 1970).

The player who makes a left (cooperative) choice in a game which has a payoff matrix like Figure 15-5 is by definition trusting, because he is assuming that his opponent will not take advantage of him by making a right-hand (competitive) choice. Martin Deutsch (1960) con-

		and B chooses			
		Left		Right	
If A chooses	Left	A wins 6¢	B wins 6¢	A wins 4¢	B wins 7¢
	Right	A wins 7¢	B wins 4¢	A loses 1¢	B loses 1¢

**Figure 15-5.** Payoff matrix for two-person game designed to test cooperative and competitive strategies (Minas, Scodel, Marlowe, & Rawson, 1960).

ducted an experiment in which subjects made the first move (player A) in such a game and then made the second move (player B) in a second game in which the other player had already made a trusting (cooperative) choice. Persons who made trusting first moves were likely to make trustworthy second moves, whereas those who made suspicious (competitive) first moves were likely to take advantage of the other player during the second move by making an untrustworthy (competitive) choice. Furthermore, persons making suspicious and untrustworthy choices tended to score higher in authoritarianism on the F scale than did those making trusting and trustworthy responses. Lawrence S. Wrightsman (1966) conducted a similar experiment and found that it made no difference in the results whether play money or real money was used. About 30% of the subjects were "trusting" in both conditions. Like Deutsch, he found that "trusting" subjects scored lower on the F scale than "distrusting" ones. Wrightsman also found some differences between trusting and distrusting subjects on a personality test measuring philosophies of human nature. Trusting subjects scored higher on scales attempting to measure positiveness or general favorability, trustworthiness, altruism, and independence. Robert S. Wyer, Jr. (1971) also found that the tendency to make uncooperative choices was due to a lack of trust, rather than to any desire to exploit the other player for personal gain.

### *The "trucking game"*

Another type of two-person game involving the use of electronic equipment has been devised by Martin Deutsch and Robert M. Krauss (1960). Players are told that they are the owners of two trucking firms, Acme and Bolt. Each must send a truck in opposite directions along the same one-lane road. They also have alternate, circuitous routes to their goals. If trucks

from both firms are blocked, face-to-face, in the middle of the one-lane stretch, they both lose money, because the payoff is determined by the amount of time needed to complete the trip. If Acme is able to send its truck down the road, thanks to Bolt's using the long, alternate route, then Acme makes more than Bolt, who may even lose money. It is obviously to their mutual advantage to take turns at going through the one-lane stretch. Players may be given bargaining power in terms of a "threat"—a gate which each can close at his end of the one-lane road, thus forcing the other player to proceed by the alternate, circuitous, money-losing route. Deutsch and Krauss found that players were more likely to find ways to cooperate and to maximize mutual gains under conditions in which they had no gates (no threats). They concluded that when players possessed potential threats, they tended to use them, thus increasing hostility and competitiveness and making cooperation more difficult. Shomer, Davis, and Kelley (1966) experimented with a variation of Deutsch and Krauss's approach and gave their players gates, but no alternate routes. They found that the availability of threat actually encouraged communication between the players and facilitated their working out cooperative arrangement. Krauss and Deutsch (1966) trained some of their players in bargaining methods and found that they earned higher payoffs (because they were more cooperative) than players who had not had this kind of training.

The results obtained so far with such research suggests that anxiety may be a factor in the degree to which people are willing to make cooperative or competitive moves. The greater the degree of threat they perceive, the more likely they are to make choices that lead to short-range, low-reward goals, goals that will be detrimental in the long run. People who are characteristically suspicious seem to be more readily panicked into choosing short-range

goals—at least, Wrightsman's (1966) study suggests this is so—whereas people who are generally trusting are more willing to expose themselves and make themselves vulnerable in the hope of bringing about cooperative solutions.

Both the trucking game and nonzero-sum games are attempts to simulate, admittedly on a small scale, the kinds of situations in which individuals and groups find themselves when trying to achieve goals that require the cooperation of others but that also lead to defensive behavior. The elements investigated in such games are universal and may be found in any human situation that evokes mixed motives, be it deciding who must do the dishes and who gets to watch television, or who gets to use some natural resource that is in short supply. The problem is that of getting people to abandon short-range goals and to work together toward goals that cost somewhat more initially, but much less in the long run.

One finding that has emerged from several studies is that cooperation is facilitated by an increase in information. In one experiment, subjects could exchange messages about their intentions before the game, before each trial, or after every tenth trial. The results showed that increased information led to increased cooperation, particularly when intentions were communicated before each of the 100 trials. The results were particularly dramatic when responses on the first 50 trials were compared with those of the last 50. As Figure 15-6 shows, subjects communicating before each trial had an average of about 25% cooperative responses during the first half of the experiment, but their percentage increased to 47% during the second half, as subjects developed more experience in dealing with their partners (Voissem & Sistrunk, 1971).

Both experience and communication also played a part in another mixed-motive experiment. Unlike-sex pairs of subjects engaged in a series of trials in which each pair had nine

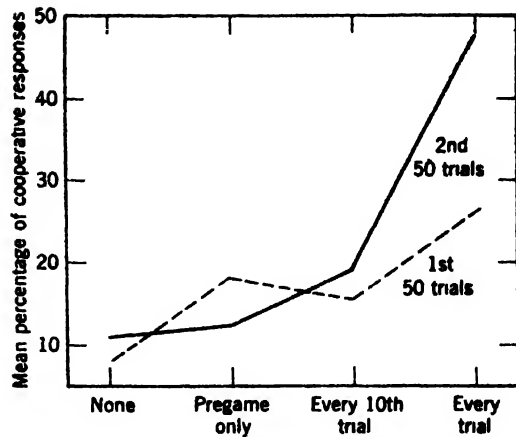


Figure 15-6. The effect of frequency of communicating intentions on the mutual cooperativeness of players in a prisoner's dilemma game (Voissem & Sistrunk, 1971).

points to divide between them in a limited amount of time, thus presenting them with a situation roughly analogous to a real-life, conflict-of-interest problem, in which two or more participants have to share some scarce resource in a way that is bound to be unequal. In this experiment, subjects were all married individuals; half played the game with their own spouses, and the other half were paired randomly with members of the opposite sex who were not their own spouses. Results showed that the married couples took less time to make their decisions and were less competitive than the other couples. The authors, D.W. Schoener and W.D. Wood (1969), concluded that the married couples were more successful in part because they were better able to communicate with each other, exchanged information more honestly, and had developed problem-solving techniques appropriate to each other's personality style.

Research with mixed-motive games so far does not permit us to draw any firm conclusions that apply to the solutions of real-life dilemmas. It may be that the findings are specific to the

experimental situations being devised and hence do not permit generalizations. On the other hand, the general approach appears to be promising, because it makes possible to encompass in miniature those variables that are basic to real-life conflicts of interest.

### *Summary*

Studies comparing group with individual performance on problems calling for *divergent* thinking (many good solutions) show that individuals working alone are more productive, particularly after they have participated in group brainstorming. Results of studies comparing group and individual performance on tasks calling for *convergent* thinking (one best solution) show that groups are superior. An experiment by Tuckman and Lorge showed that groups were more effective than individuals working alone, because members of groups collectively could provide more possible solutions than any single member working alone. Maier showed that qualities of groups' solutions of complex problems could be improved if group leaders were trained to permit minority opinion to be heard. Performance of groups can also be improved if the structure is clear—that is, if members know who is the leader and particularly if the personal qualities of members are appropriate to their assigned positions. The most efficient groups in one study were those who included one member who had scored noticeably higher than the other members on a personality test measuring traits associated with decision making.

Early experiments with various structural arrangements in small problem-solving groups showed that groups with a highly centralized structure (wheel) tended to be more efficient, but that groups with a decentralized structure (circle) tended to be more satisfying to group

members and more flexible as well. Later research showed that decentralized groups were superior on complex problems, whereas centralized groups were not. Another study showed that centralized groups were also efficient with complex problems, provided they were given sufficient time to develop the kind of structure needed. Still more recent research suggests that decentralized groups are more effective in dealing with environmental variables that increase the complexity of the problem situation, such as the introduction of positive and negative reinforcement and the need to adapt to environmental changes.

When subjects are given situations in which a hypothetical individual must choose between a safe, low-reward option and a risky option with a high potential reward, and are asked to indicate the lowest number of chances per 100 that would justify the individual selecting the risky option, they are likely to modify this recommendation in a risky direction later, after discussing it in a group context. This phenomenon is termed the *risky shift*. The best explanation for it seems to be the high value that risk has in our society, and the low value that caution has. People tend to think that they are as favorably oriented toward risk as most people, if not more so. When they get into a group discussion, they find that some people are even riskier than they are, and they modify their stance accordingly. Some evidence suggests that the risky shift may be particular to the kind of experimental situation in which it is induced. When subjects engage in risk-taking behavior with real rewards, or have to make recommendations for people like themselves, the risky shift is reduced, and the shift is even in the direction of more conservatism.

A great deal of cooperation takes place in informal ways when people perform interlocking and reciprocal roles. When supervisors talk about getting cooperation from their subor-

dinates, they usually mean compliance and obedience. In laboratory task groups, a concern for individual goals at the expense of group goals leads to competition and interferes with performance in situations in which members must function interdependently. Where there is low task interdependence, competition may help stimulate a higher level of achievement and make the task more interesting. On the affective outcomes of group interaction, research presents mixed results. One study with members of discussion groups found that members were better satisfied and liked one another better when rewards were shared equally (conducive to cooperation) than when rewards were given out individually (conducive to competition). However, another study with Army combat engineering squads in training showed that morale and psychological adjustment were improved when competition was introduced. These contradictory results can perhaps be explained in terms of the kind of task assigned and differences in the populations from which the subjects were drawn. In real-life situations where production is a factor, employees often resent attempts to introduce competition into the work situation and will harass workers who do so. Urbanized societies tend to be more competitive than traditional ones, yet they also generate situations that can be solved only by cooperation on an equal-status basis.

Research with two-person mixed-motive (nonzero-sum or prisoners' dilemma) games, in which cooperation results in modest gains for the players, whereas mutually competitive tactics usually result in losses, shows that participants cooperate only about 50% of the time. Even 100% cooperation on the part of one player was able to evoke only 38% cooperation on the part of the other players. There are some differences among players with respect to personality patterns, with those who are generally trusting making more cooperative responses than those who are not. In a similar type of mixed-motive game, involving the operation of imaginary trucking firms, it was found that players could cooperate better if they were unable to enforce threats. Players who were taught to bargain were also more successful in playing the game. Cooperative behavior appears to be facilitated in such games by players' communicating their intentions to each other—the more communication, the more cooperation. Married couples, who already have a history of successful communication, are better able to cooperate in mixed-motive games than are couples paired randomly. Although research with mixed-motive games does not permit us to draw firm conclusions about solving real-life problems, it does have the merit of enabling us to test situations which embody the elements of conflict that are basic to such problems.





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# Chapter 16

## Leaders and Leadership

As we have noted previously, people come together in groups to satisfy both task and social needs. Their ability to satisfy these needs depends on a number of factors, not the least of which is the behavior of their leaders. Some of the research covered in Chapter 14 made the point that the effectiveness of groups depends largely on their ability to find a workable kind of structure, particularly a structure that makes it clear who shall dominate, direct, and influence, and who shall occupy subordinate positions. The research by Smelser (1961) that we discussed also indicated that such structural arrangements function better if key positions are occupied by people who are suited for them by reason of certain personal characteristics.

The research by Lewin, Lippitt, and White

(1939), described in Chapter 13, also showed how persons in leadership positions can markedly influence the group climate, which, in turn, has a significant effect on the behavior and productivity of group members. In the present chapter we shall explore in greater detail some of the ways in which leaders behave, the kinds of characteristics they are likely to display, and the behavior that results on the part of the members of the groups they lead.

## *Functions of Leaders*

### *Definitions of leadership*

The leadership role, according to Marvin E. Shaw (1971), has been studied more extensively and defined in more different ways than almost any other concept related to group structure. Shaw's own definition of *leader* is both neat and economical: he defines it as the group member who exerts more positive influence over others than they exert over him. The term "positive" in this context indicates that the direction of the influence is that chosen by the leader.

In a sense, any group member's attempt to influence the behavior or the motives (attitudes, values, feelings) of one or more members of a group is an attempt at leadership. In the last chapter we described the *risky shift* that occurs as a result of group discussions of choices faced by hypothetical individuals. In these groups, members who are more favorable to risky options influence the other members and hence perform leadership functions. Leadership, however, is more than an attempt to influence others; its presence is indicated by the changes that take place subsequently.

This view of leadership means that any member of a group can play leadership roles at some time or other. Indeed, it is possible

to measure any group member's leadership behavior on a scale ranging from considerable down to very little or none. Even in groups that have autocratic leaders and a relatively high degree of structure, members who are low in status and prestige may at times display behavior that influences others—even leaders. An analysis of such groups, however, would show that leaders are more likely to influence and that nonleaders are less likely to do so. Although anyone who successfully influences can be said to be exercising some kind of leadership, this type of influence most usually occurs within the structure of a social system. If the behavior persists, it is likely to contribute to the development of a system that has stability and endures over a period of time.

Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn (1966) maintain that the term "leadership," as it is used in social science literature, has three major meanings: an attribute of a position, a characteristic of a person, and a category of behavior. In most discussions, the three meanings are employed simultaneously; that is, they are used to refer to a person who possesses certain qualities, who occupies a certain position, and who behaves in certain ways. The three meanings are in no sense mutually exclusive; they are ways of recognizing that the influence potential of leaders may be related to different qualities or characteristics. A lieutenant will be obeyed by a company of soldiers if he gives a certain order, irrespective of whether he is the kind of person whom they would ordinarily look to for leadership or whether the kind of behavior he displays is very leaderlike according to the usual norms. In this instance, his position alone makes him a leader. When Hatshepsut made herself pharaoh of Egypt toward the end of the second millennium B.C., her decrees were obeyed like those of the kings who preceded and followed her, even though there had never been a female pharaoh before.

### *Leadership and the power to influence*

The position occupied by an official or unofficial leader gives him a greater leverage when it comes to power and influence than does the position of any other member of a group. We usually expect leaders to try to influence our behavior, and their attempts to influence constitute some of the role behaviors attached to the position of leader. We expect, in turn, that we shall be influenced, because such expectations are consistent with the position of follower or subordinate.

A study by L. Richard Hoffman and Norman R. F. Maier (1967) demonstrates rather clearly that an individual who is put into a leadership position will try to influence the group and that the group, in turn, will permit itself to be influenced. The researchers assigned a problem involving human relations in an industrial setting<sup>1</sup> to groups of three and four college sophomores and directed them to discuss it with a view to producing the best solution possible. One member of each group was selected at random to serve as group leader. Before the discussion session, the leaders were privately promised a reward of \$1.50 if they would achieve the goal set for them. Half were told that the goal was the highest-quality solution to the problem, and half were told that the goal was the group's satisfaction with the solution. An analysis of the solutions showed that even when the leaders' goal was the satisfaction of the group, they still exercised more influence on the solution the group adopted than did the other members of the group. Not only did the leaders tend to dominate and control discussion, but their domination and control was accepted by the group. When we recollect that these leaders were selected randomly from the

<sup>1</sup>This particular problem was selected largely because previous experience had shown that discussion groups of college students resolved it in a number of different ways, thus making it possible to detect the influence of various group members.

group, and not because of any indication of interest or ability in leadership, the results of this study are clear evidence that the position of leader tends to endow whoever the holder happens to be with considerable power and influence.

Leaders also perform other roles than that of influencing the members of their group. For example, a leader may communicate with other groups on his group's behalf. He may serve as a channel of information. He may help meet some of the dependency needs of group members who are looking for a parent figure or a source of reassurance. Behavior of his that is irrelevant to the goals of the group may also be imitated by other group members: they may, for example, start using his brand of cigarettes or some of his favorite expressions.

Some leaders will not ordinarily be visible as such, even though they exercise a considerable degree of influence. The secretary to an executive may be such a person. She is in a key position to control the flow of communication to and from her boss and may often serve as an interpreter of his wishes to subordinates. She may also, in various ways, influence his opinions on diverse matters and communicate ideas to subordinates that are more hers than his. If she plays her roles subtly enough, few people will be aware that she is actually leading. Other secretaries are less subtle; their influence is both resented and feared, but this does not necessarily interfere with their ability to exert influence.

Leaders may thus be official and unofficial. Official leaders generally have the advantage, because they are more visible, and group behavior becomes almost automatically referred to their attitudes and attempts to influence. Unofficial leaders are more likely to gain power when official leadership is unavailable and a power vacuum develops. This may occur when the leader is physically absent, or it may occur when the group rejects or ignores the leader.

In the example of the secretary who comes to wield considerable influence, it is possible that her boss is preoccupied with other problems, that his responsibilities are too extensive for him to handle easily, or that he finds it more efficient to use his secretary as a kind of junior partner in his attempts to lead. In democratically oriented groups, leaders often play their roles in such a way to encourage the development of junior-grade leadership among the other members of the group, as a way of improving group effectiveness and morale and increasing involvement.

Official leaders go by many titles: president, chairman, captain, manager, mayor, legislator, and chief are some of them, but teachers, consultants, lawyers, physicians, and policemen also serve as leaders much of the time.

### *Power and prestige*

The extent to which leaders can influence the behavior of others is termed *power*. Power varies with the *prestige* of the leader: the degree to which his actions are regarded as significant, relevant, and important by others. Prestige may be attached to a position; even positions of intermediate status have a greater or lesser degree of built-in prestige to the end that anyone who occupies them is able to exercise some degree of influence, irrespective of who he is. Individuals also have a greater or lesser degree of prestige, based partly on the positions they occupy in other contexts and partly on the way in which their behavior is perceived by others. A television celebrity is given special consideration when he appears at a social gathering, for he is listened to more carefully and is permitted to "upstage" local leaders. Celebrities possess *salience*, the quality of being highly visible and standing out against a background. In political contests, this quality alone may on occasion attract enough attention to cause voters to elect those who possess it to high political offices.

Prestige is also related to an individual's claims to status on the basis of the position or positions held in other contexts or to the social class of which he is a member.

### *The transferability of leadership*

What this means is that there is a tendency for individuals who play leadership roles in one context to play them in others as well. This tendency is stronger when situations are similar, of course, but the carry-over effect does persist even when situations are dissimilar (Carter, Haythorn, & Howell, 1950). In effect, the perceptions, attitudes, values, and ways of thinking that these individuals have learned in various group settings become a part of their general pattern or style of behavior. When they enter a new group, they begin playing roles that are familiar to them. They interact with others in a leaderlike way, and this behavior, in turn, tends to evoke followerlike behavior from the other group members. A chain of behavior is set into operation whereby their perception of themselves as leaders helps others to perceive them in the same way.

This phenomenon appeared in a study of two Parent-Teacher Association groups each of which met together for three sessions to look at and discuss mental health films. The post-film discussions were tape recorded, and experimenters kept notes in order to identify the initiator and target of every comment that was made. Experimenters also collected biographical data on the participants and administered sociometric instruments. At the third and final meeting of the groups, members were asked to indicate whom they would like to have as president and vice president of their group, if it were to continue. Data from these various sources enabled researchers to determine three kinds of status for each participant: interaction, friendship, and leadership.

Results showed that all three kinds of status

measures were positively intercorrelated, but that leadership status accounted for most of the variance. The researchers also concluded that discussion in small groups of this type, where people are already acquainted, is largely confined to those members of the group who enjoy superior status in other contexts by virtue of their education and profession. Not only were these higher-status individuals more active in their participation, but they also addressed most of their comments to one another. Members who ranked low in leadership status tended to address their remarks toward high-status persons, instead of to other low-status members. Although the leaders of the group also ranked high on the friendship choices made by other members, an analysis of scores showed that it was leadership and not friendship that determined the amount of participation in the discussion (Lana, Vaughan, & McGinnies, 1960).

### *Types of Leaders and Categories of Leadership*

There are many ways in which individuals can influence others, although some roles and activities are more conducive to influence than others. Indeed, any action in which an individual contributes to group goals in a way that is significantly different from other members can be considered as a kind of leadership. Almost any typology that applies to a given role or position will be deficient in the sense that each behavior category runs the risk of including too much or too little of the relevant activities performed. Yet some kind of descriptive analysis appears to be in order if only to suggest what leaders actually do in influencing others. As we proceed through this rather extensive list, it is important to keep in mind that many of the categories overlap, and that

the activities of a given leader will put him into several, if most, of these categories at one time or another.<sup>2</sup>

#### *The administrator*

This broad, general term covers a wide variety of activities: planning, coordinating, managing, directing, and organizing. Administrators are people who see that things get done. They occupy key positions in organizations or groups that have been created to accomplish a specific end or goal, usually that of producing goods or providing services. The administrator's two main tasks are to direct the maintenance of organizational processes and to carry out the organization's policies.

Administration may also include policy making, although many experts see policy making as separate from administration, maintaining that the two functions call for separate skills and generally are carried out by separate individuals and groups. In the United States, for instance, the Congress is supposed to make policy, and the President, as the chief executive and chief administrative officer, is supposed to carry it out. In reality, however, the administrator's control of personnel and resources, and his access to information, not only puts him in a position to make policy, but also a series of unexpected events may create emergencies calling for prompt, on-the-spot decisions that only he is in a position to make. The attempt to maintain administration and policy making as separate functions usually results in an uneasy balance of power between administrators and policy makers, with administrators having the initial advantage, but with policy-making groups having the final say and possessing a veto power.

<sup>2</sup>Concepts embodied in this typology are drawn from a number of sources, including Bass (1960); Krech, Crutchfield, and Ballachey (1962); and Lindgren (1954).

*The bureaucrat*

This term is usually applied to individuals who hold positions in the intermediate and lower levels of the administrative hierarchy in an organization and who have more or less specialized duties in directing and supervising organizational processes. Any large organization must divide up its functions into special areas, each of which is assigned to a separate branch, irrespective of whether the organization is governmental, military, religious, or business in character. Whatever power the bureaucratic leader may possess derives from the structure of the organization and the formalized regulations that prescribe, define, and limit his roles and functions. Organizations that have existed over a period of time are likely to develop structures with a high degree of flexibility and durability. The Roman Empire, for example, is said to have been able to withstand the debilitating effects of decades of misrule by incompetent emperors, some of them merely adventurers and opportunists, by virtue of a strong bureaucracy that carried on the business of the Empire in spite of what was going on at the top levels.

*The policy maker*

The policy maker may also be an administrator; he is less likely to be a bureaucrat, although even lesser bureaucrats may at times make policy by the way they carry out their duties. In large organizations, policy makers are likely to be members of boards of directors or legislators. The administrator generally serves as the chief consultant to bodies of policy makers and, when policy has been formulated, carries it out. The policy maker is often a covert leader—that is, he may exert influence without revealing himself. “The man behind the throne” is a common phrase to describe this kind of leader.

*The expert*

The expert generally works in a consultant capacity to policy makers and administrators. He is a specialist in some field of information that is of value to the organizational leaders. He may participate in the formulating of policy and in planning, but his role is generally that of a commentator, critic, and special resource person.

The first three types of leaders described are what is termed “line.” They are charged with the responsibility of formulating objectives and/or carrying them out. The expert is “staff,” because he bears no direct responsibility for the results that obtain as a result of the efforts of line personnel. Medical specialists, personnel managers, industrial psychologists, and public relations officers are all “staff” in a manufacturing organization, whereas foremen, superintendents, production managers, and salesmen are all “line.” In a school system, the superintendent, teachers, and principals would be “line” personnel, whereas the school psychologists, counselors, and school nurses would all be “staff.”

*The ideologist*

Like the expert, the ideologist is a specialist, but he is a specialist in ideas and beliefs, rather than in some technical field. The ideologist is concerned with the basic theories that are implied by various forms of social behavior. Saint Augustine, Luther, Galileo, Mohammed, Karl Marx, and Theodore Herzl are examples of highly influential ideologists whose teachings have altered the lives of millions. Most leaders are ideologists to some extent; that is, their attempts to lead reflect some pattern of beliefs as to what the goals of the group should be and how they should be attained.

### *The charismatic leader*

*Charisma* is a Greek term used to designate a favor or a gift granted by God that enables the recipient to have some special power with respect to his fellow men—the ability to heal or to perform miracles, for example. The term was introduced into social science by Max Weber (1947), who applied it to leaders with strong emotional appeal. When this is coupled with an ideology, as it was with some diverse individuals as Luther, Mohammed, St. Francis, and Adolf Hitler, the combination can be very attractive, particularly for the dissatisfied. Yesterday's charismatic leaders were likely to be religious; today's are likely to be political. The difference, however, may be largely superficial, because the charismatic political leader of today is able to imbue his followers with a zeal that goes beyond mere politics and is, in the final analysis, built largely on unquestioning faith in his miraculous powers. Eric Hoffer (1951) called the followers of charismatic leaders "true believers," and made the point that their blind faith is based on a belief in their own worthlessness and inadequacy. It is only through identifying with a "movement" and a superleader, he said, that they are able to gain a sense of selfhood and personal adequacy.

We have used the term "charismatic leader" to apply to leaders whose appeal is largely emotional. Most leaders who are effective succeed in part because they have qualities that enable their followers to identify with them. Social attractiveness, as we have noted, is based largely on perceived similarity, and however different from his followers a leader may appear to an observer, he still is similar enough to them in order for them to find ways to identify with him. Franco would not be attractive to the Spanish if he were Italian and if he did not represent values that many Spanish people feel are important and essentially Spanish. Katz

and Kahn (1966) point out that in the presidential elections of 1952 and 1956, Adlai Stevenson had charisma for American intellectuals, but not for the rank and file. Dwight Eisenhower, on the other hand, talked and acted like the man in the street, for all his military and academic honors, and therefore had more charisma for the average voter.

### *The political leader*

The political leader embodies something of most of the leader types we have discussed so far. He is a policy maker, is often an ideologist, and must have at least a touch of charisma in order to be elected. Although he operates within an organization—a government—he often functions like an entrepreneur or independent trader. Politicians achieve goals for themselves, their friends, and the people who elect them by elaborate systems of bargaining and favor trading. Nonpoliticians are disturbed by this practice whenever they learn of it; it smacks of chicanery, double-dealing, and graft. There is no doubt that politicians have used these methods to further their own ends, but the fact remains that negotiation and compromise are necessary in any problem-solving situation involving the interests of multiples of groups and individuals. No one can have his own way all the time, and political arrangements are needed to ensure a more or less equitable sharing of benefits and rewards. And so political agreements are made. "I'll support your bill to increase the number of circuit judges. I'll agree that there is a tremendous backlog of cases and that the judgeships are needed. But I'll expect your support for my bill to increase minimum salaries for teachers when it comes up."

What nonpoliticians do not realize is that their voting for a legislator is, in effect, a political agreement of much the same nature: the



electorate agrees to support the prospective legislator in exchange for his willingness to support their political goals.

### *The symbolic leader*

An important dimension of a leader's role is his ability not only to represent and speak for his group, but also to represent his group symbolically. The Ambassador from Thailand is treated with respect because he represents (i.e., stands for) the people of Thailand. In a manner of speaking, he "is" Thailand in this country. In a meeting of heads of state, of course, the King of Thailand will "be" Thailand and will be treated with respect as though he embodied all the Thai people in his person. On several occasions, vice presidents of the United States have been pelted with eggs by left-wing elements in the countries they were visiting. It is possible that the animosity so expressed was personal, but it is more likely that they were so treated because they were perceived as representing the United States. In other words, the egg throwers thought of themselves as insulting a country they despised. The official apologies of the host country after the incident were a way of recognizing that the insults were directed toward the United States and of expressing embarrassment at not being able to control this group of dissidents.

Symbolic leaders also have a high degree of ritual value. Relations between groups of people, like nations, take place between symbolic leaders interacting in a very formal, ritualistic way, that is, in ways that have been prescribed by custom and precedent. Although such ritual is often criticized as being "empty" or "meaningless," it appears to provide a necessary channel for communication and interaction.

There are many other instances, of course, in which leaders, or authority figures act out symbolic and ritualistic roles. The general man-

ager presides over a dinner at the best restaurant in town to celebrate the retirement of a timekeeper who has been with the company for forty years. On behalf of the management he presents him with a check and on behalf of the employees he presents him with a gold watch. It is all very symbolic and has little utilitarian value, but the ceremony does provide everyone with an opportunity to wish the old timekeeper well. Such rituals can also have a positive effect on the cohesiveness of the total group, because their purpose is to show solidarity and personal appreciation and not to achieve production. The general manager is the logical person to perform the ritual, because he, more than anyone else, represents the total group.

An analogous example is the action of the father giving the bride away at a wedding. Everyone knows that in our society the bride is a free agent and needs no one to give her to her husband, but important occasions seem to require something both special and traditional in the way of a show—a ritual—to express the degree of importance we attach to them. The father, in this instance, is an authority figure who represents the family and is the logical person to play this role.

### *The parent figure*

The earliest group that most of us experience is the family, and the first leaders with whom we become acquainted are our parents. As we go on to school, teachers take on parental roles, and the school has by law a relationship with us that is *in loco parentis*—in place of a parent. There is a tendency, particularly during childhood and adolescence, for us to regard all authority figures in somewhat the same way we regard our own parents. This tendency may even linger throughout life, with the result that leaders and other persons in authority often take on certain parental characteristics. Leaders' roles, furthermore, often resemble those of

parents: they reward, punish, admonish, chide, encourage, direct, and so forth. These are all part of the role traditionally assigned to parents.

There are two main types of parental leaders. One is the dominating, forbidding, punishing, demanding, authoritarian leader—the so-called “father figure.” The other is the nourishing, sheltering, understanding, supportive, reassuring leader—the “mother figure.” Most leaders, irrespective of their sex, represent a combination of these two types. They are reflected, for example, in the leadership styles termed “structure initiation” and “consideration,” which we discuss later in this chapter. Some leaders emphasize one more than the other, of course. A counselor or psychiatrist is more likely to emphasize the “mother” qualities, whereas a policeman or an assembly-line foreman is more likely to represent the “father” qualities, with many individual exceptions in each case, of course.

### *The leader as a scapegoat*

It is quite common for people to feel a degree of ambivalence, resentment, or even hostility toward authority figures. This appears in the relatively large number of cartoons that satirize the problems of business executives, professors, psychiatrists, political leaders, and the like. This hostility may stem from a wish that we might be free of leaders—free, that is, to speak and act for ourselves without any interference or unwanted help. Perhaps we resent the fact that leaders are perceived as being more important—more visible—than the rank and file—us. When we see the mayor of our city driving around town in a chauffeur-driven Cadillac, we may think: “That’s only right. After all, we are proud of our city, and we wouldn’t want the mayor to greet important people in an ordinary car.” But we may also think: “Who does the mayor think he is, any-

way? He’s no better a person than I, and he could get along just as well in a Volkswagen, instead of driving around in that ‘fancy rig at my expense!’” There is, in other words, a tendency to want to elevate leaders and at the same time to bring them down to our own level.

One of the functions of leaders is that of taking on a high degree of responsibility for the operation of the groups they head. If members are not satisfied with results, they are likely to look for someone to blame, and the logical target for blame is the person in charge.

Americans are inclined to express hostile feelings toward leaders somewhat more openly than people in more traditional cultures, a tendency perhaps suggesting that Americans rate high in hostility toward leaders. Another possible interpretation may be that hostile feelings toward leaders may be submerged—suppressed or repressed—in other cultures. In one set of studies, American, Canadian, and Arab subjects were asked to take a sentence-completion test,<sup>3</sup> in which the “stems” (beginnings of sentences) all referred to authority figures. Completions were classified as “accepting,” “hostile,” or “anxious.” Table 16-1 lists some of the stems used in the studies and gives examples as to how completions were classified. Overall results showed that Arabs and Canadians gave more hostile responses than Americans. Americans tended to show more acceptance of authority figures than Canadians, who, in turn, showed more acceptance than Arabs. An item-by-item analysis showed, however, that Canadians tended to be more accepting than Americans of prestigious figures (“famous people,” “judges,” “naval officers”), whereas Arabs tended to be more accepting of people in authority with whom they came into direct personal contact (“When I have a difference of

<sup>3</sup>The sentence-completion test is a type of semi-structured projective test. Like other projective tests, it attempts to tap motives and attitudes that lie beyond ordinary awareness.

**Table 16-1** *Stems and Completions in a Sentence Completion Test Designed to Measure Attitudes toward Authority Figures (from data supplied by Lindgren & Lindgren, 1960)*

Stem	Sentence completion	Attitude expressed
College presidents generally	are men of wide cultural background impress me as rather stiff and unapproachable are awesome	Acceptance Hostility Anxiety
Most employers	are satisfied with my work should take a course in personal relations upset me	Acceptance Hostility Anxiety
When I have dealings with businessmen,	I like to trust them I am struck with their materialism I usually feel somewhat inferior out of my element	Acceptance Hostility Anxiety
When I was in grade school the teachers	I had were good did not impress me were frightening	Acceptance Hostility Anxiety

opinion with an instructor, Being reprimanded and criticized ) but were more hostile toward governmental authority figures ( policemen, government ministers army officers ) (Lindgren & Lindgren 1960 Sallery & Lindgren, 1966)

Some of the resentment felt toward leaders may be due to a belief that they receive more than their share of the rewards Solidarity and cohesiveness are reinforced as we noted in Chapter 15, when rewards are shared equally by groups In one study of small-group behavior in which problems of the twenty questions type were solved the groups who shared equally in rewards and who functioned without leaders made higher scores and expressed more satisfaction than did groups whose leaders received an extra reward (Goldman, Bolen, & Martin, 1961)

It is quite possible, of course, that a group's

ability to express hostility toward its leader may have some positive effects on its performance Some psychologists maintain that the expression of negative feelings has a cathartic or cleansing effect and enables the individual to focus his energies on creativity, production, and cooperation, and other forms of positive behavior (Dollard et al., 1939, Menninger, 1948, Baruch, 1949) Other psychologists find contrary evidence (Bandura & Walters, 1963) It is quite possible that the free expression of hostility helps in some situations and hinders in others The problem at this moment seems to be that of finding out what the characteristics of those situations are In any event, the most valid conclusion seems to be that all groups tend to have both positive and negative feelings about leaders, but that the extent to which negative feelings are freely expressed varies from culture to culture Although evidence is

scanty, it seems likely that free expression of hostility and resentment is more common in cultures characterized by more democratic values and attitudes and more inhibited in cultures characterized by more authoritarianism.

### *Personal Characteristics of Leaders*

What does it take to be a leader? Common sense would tell us that a major quality is experience. Political candidates who have held any government post in the past urge us to "Vote for experience," and many an appointment to a position of authority has been based on relative differences in the "experience" of the candidates. Fred E. Fiedler (1970), however, reviewed the data from three experiments and observations of eleven sets of task group supervisors and was unable to find any evidence that time spent in a leadership capacity had any relationship to effectiveness as indicated by the performance of groups supervised. Although time on the job was correlated positively with effectiveness in some types of situations, it was correlated negatively in others. Fiedler admits, however, that he did not sample all possible kinds of leadership situations, but points out that the overall median correlation between leader experience and group effectiveness was  $-.12$ . If experience had been as important as we ordinarily think, it should have made more of a showing.

As Fiedler points out, his findings do not disprove the relationship between experience and effectiveness; they merely show that it did not appear as expected. With this note of ambiguity, we then turn to other and, hopefully, more convincing variables.

### *Intelligence*

Common sense would suggest that persons appointed, elected, or otherwise perceived as

leaders rate higher in intelligence than the rank and file, and research appears to bear out this observation. In a review of personality characteristics related to behavior in small groups, Richard D. Mann (1959) noted that intelligence was the characteristic found to be most commonly associated with leadership.

Here is one type of study that shows positive relationship between intelligence and leadership. Ralph J. Kiessling and Richard A. Kalish (1961) made use of an assessment procedure known as the "leaderless group discussion" technique, a method whereby applicants for positions requiring the exercise of leadership qualities are assembled in small discussion groups. No leader is assigned or appointed, and group members are "on their own." Judges then observe the group through a one-way screen and score the performance of individuals in terms of the extent to which they display behavior that aids or facilitates the functioning of the group. The process can therefore be used as a method for rating potential for "natural" leadership. In the study conducted by Kiessling and Kalish, a significant and positive correlation ( $.35$ ) was found between leadership ratings and scores made on standard intelligence tests. Another study that is suggestive of a positive relationship between intelligence and leadership was conducted by Lindgren (1973), who asked college students who had participated in courses taught by a discussion method to rate one another on leadership potential. The mean ratings students received on this sociometric measure correlated  $.41$  (males) and  $.38$  (females) with their overall college grade-point averages.

### *Dominance*

The second highest number of positive correlations between leadership and personality traits in the survey conducted by Mann (1959) was with dominance.

Edwin I. Megargee (1969) administered the Dominance scale of the California Psychological Inventory to university students and selected those scoring near the top and the bottom of the scale as subjects in a two-person experiment that required one person to be a leader and the other to be a follower. The decision as to which one of the pair would take the leader's role was left up to the subjects. Results showed that 75% of the high-dominant men and 70% of the high-dominant women took the leader position in situations in which they were paired with low-dominant individuals of their own sex. When high-dominant women were paired with low-dominant men, tradition exerted its influence, as we noted when we mentioned this study in Chapter 9, and the women took the follower role in all but 22% of the test situations. It is important to note, however, that even in such instances, it was the high-dominant woman who made the decision as to who should be in charge.

### *Adjustment*

The roles that leaders play are likely to be more demanding than those played by other members of the groups they lead. If this is so, it would then appear that neurotic tendencies would interfere with their effectiveness. It is also likely, furthermore, that our perception of an individual's adjustment influences our willingness to accept him as a leader. Mann (1959) noted that adjustment tended to be associated with leadership, with approximately 30% of the studies surveyed showing significant, positive relationships.

A typical study is one conducted by Stephen J. Fitzsimmons and F. L. Marcuse (1961), who administered a sentence-completion test to fifty university students who had been presidents of their fraternities and a matched group of fifty fraternity members who had held neither fraternity nor nonfraternity positions of leader-

ship. This procedure enabled the researchers to study two sharply contrasting groups, the elected leaders and the nonleaders, thus eliminating those who had held minor positions of leadership. When the sentence-completion responses were scored on twelve different adjustment categories, leaders had higher (better adjusted) scores on eleven. Although there was some overlap between the two groups, results indicated that leaders had fewer neurotic traits than did nonleaders. The researchers concluded that leadership tends to operate most effectively in the absence of negative personality traits that might interfere with their performance.

Some studies by David O. Moberg (1953a,b) also confirm the positive relationship between leadership and adjustment. Moberg found that people who had played leadership roles in their churches tended to be better adjusted in old age than those who had not. He found no difference in adjustment between old people who had been church members and those who had not; leadership was the only significantly relevant variable.

The fact that leaders tend to be well-adjusted does not necessarily mean that they have good insight. Fred Fiedler (1967) notes that leaders' perceptions of their own behavior are not very accurate. It may be, indeed, that leaders are not especially introspective, as a whole, for Mann (1959) found that the percentage of studies reporting significant, positive correlations between leadership and extraversion was as almost as high as that between leadership and adjustment.

### *Activity*

We noted, a few pages back, in our description of the Parent-Teacher Association groups (Lana, Vaughan, & McGinnies, 1960), that those who were more active in discussions were the ones likely to be perceived by the group

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as leaders. The idea that leaders are inclined to have a high degree of participation in whatever the group is doing is supported by other research studies as well. Hayes, Melzer, and Bouma (1968) reviewed the literature on vocal activity in groups and noted that the most active member in a group is the one who tends to have the highest status among the members and to be most often chosen as the leader.

Charles G. Morris and J. Richard Hackman (1969) studied the behavior of three-person groups working on a variety of tasks. In two-thirds of the groups, the members with the highest degree of participation was also perceived as the leader. Table 16-2 lists the behavioral descriptions made by members that characterized this kind of person. In effect, they restate much of what we have been saying about the behavior of individuals who successfully occupy the position of leader. One-third

of the high participators were not perceived as leaders by the other members. Their behavior did not differ markedly from that of the high-participating leaders, as far as the experimenters could tell, except that these nonleaders appeared to engage in more disagreement and were inclined to spend more time "structuring" problems—that is, investigating the task and members' opinions, defining words, reading or discussing the problem statement, stating the time remaining. These active nonleaders, in other words, tended to de-emphasize activities related to overall group effectiveness and performance.

Before the groups started on their tasks, the experimenters randomly designated one member as the leader of the group. No clarification was given about the duties of these "leaders" and no further mention was made of the assignment. This act of appointment evi-

**Table 16-2. Behavioral Descriptions Having a High Degree of Interrelationship and Associated with Leadership Behavior in Three-Person Groups (Morris & Hackman, 1969)**

Was the real "idea man" in the group, suggesting new ways of handling the group's problem.\*

Was the real leader of the group.

Was in the forefront of the group's discussion.

Is a creative person.

Prodded the group to complete the task.

Influenced the opinions of others.

Kept the group from straying too far from the topic.

Worked well with others in the group.

Interrupted others when they were speaking.

\* Listed in order of their significance

dently had some facilitative effect on the members' subsequent behavior, because two-thirds of them (twice as many as would be expected by chance) were perceived by the other members as displaying leaderlike behavior. This is an example of how a position influences the self-perception of the individual who happens to occupy it and, as a consequence, his behavior.

### *Nonconformity*

The findings we have reported so far are consistent with common sense: most people would not be very surprised to learn that leaders tend to be more intelligent and dominant and less neurotic than the average person. The idea, however, that leaders deviate more from the norms than others do may come as a surprise. Somehow, deviancy seems to imply psychopathology, which would, of course, be inconsistent with the notion that leaders are well adjusted.

There are a number of studies that suggest that leaders tend to be freer of normative pres-

ures than most people. One investigation of yielding and nonyielding behavior of members of cliques showed that the leaders and the members with the lowest status tended to conform the least, whereas middle-status members conformed the most (Harvey & Consalvi, 1960). Ronald S. Wilson (1960) obtained much the same results when he polled high-, low-, and intermediate-status members of groups about their personal beliefs.

These results suggest that leaders and low-status members both are relatively independent of group pressures. Very probably, because leaders are less neurotic, they are able to use their ability to think independently in the service of the group, whereas low-ranking members are not. High-ranking group members, furthermore, are evidently able to express deviant views in ways that are less likely to upset other group members, whereas lower-status members either have not learned this technique or are not interested in doing so. Leaders tend to be more concerned about group solidarity than most people. In one study of small group interaction, they agreed with others more and made more attempts to reduce tension than did other members of the groups (McClintock, 1963). It is possible that leaders tend to be people who are able to keep a reasonable balance between maintaining the cohesiveness of the group and expressing nonconforming ideas and behavior. Inasmuch as the solidarity of the group is an important goal for them, they are less likely to compromise it by indulging in the free expression of ideas and feelings that deviate too markedly from those of most of the group members.

### *Social distance*

The fact that leaders prize solidarity and cohesiveness in the groups for which they are responsible does not necessarily mean that they

also favor closeness and intimacy with group members. A number of studies show that the most effective leaders, as measured by the performance of their groups, are those who are able to maintain a degree of social or psychological distance between themselves and the other members of the group they supervise. This is especially true of work groups.

Fred E. Fiedler (1958) made a study of the effectiveness of a variety of task groups and compared successful and unsuccessful high school basketball teams, surveying teams, Air Force bomber crews, Army tank crews, open-hearth shops in steel mills, and farm supply cooperatives, and found that psychological distance between supervisors and the supervised was positively correlated with various success measures. He concluded that the person who leads a work or task group should be an individual who is able to maintain a degree of psychological distance between himself and the other members of the group. He theorized that this type of relationship enables the person in authority to be more objective, which, in turn prevents his becoming emotionally involved in or overly attached to his subordinates and permits the establishment of better discipline and businesslike working conditions. He made it clear, however, that these conclusions apply only to work groups, and that other types of tasks, such as heading policy-making groups, probably demand leaders with different attitudes toward their subordinates. Sheer social distance, however, is insufficient in and of itself as a predictor of group success, for the leader must also be accepted by the other members of the group. This, in turn, implies a high degree of task orientation on the part of the members, because they would probably be unwilling to submit to a leader's attempts to enforce discipline, unless they were committed to the successful completion of the tasks assigned them.

## *Structure Initiation versus Consideration in Leaders*

The results of Fiedler's research seem to support the traditional idea that a supervisor should command, direct, discipline, and reward in order to be effective. This model, however, has been subjected to a considerable degree of criticism by psychologists, as well as by other experts in the field of employee relations, who have maintained that it is the more democratic, permissive, considerate, and person-oriented type of leader who gets the best results. This latter school of thought has taken its cues from work done during the late 1920's and early 1930's at the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric Company, located near Chicago (Hormans, 1965; Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939).

### *The Hawthorne study*

Research at the Hawthorne plant consisted of three major activities: (1) interviews and inquiries aimed at learning something about the attitudes employees have toward their work; (2) observation of work habits and interpersonal relations among teams of workers; and (3) study of the work behavior, interpersonal relations, and production of a group of five women engaged in putting together small electrical relays.

Research findings showed, among other things, that there was a considerable gap between the ideas of management and staff about employee attitudes toward work and the attitudes that employees actually had. Management assumed, for example, that the employees' primary motivation was economic, and had, therefore, arranged pay schedules in such a way that increased production would be reflected in increased earnings. Workers, however, tacitly agreed among themselves as to what a "fair day's work" should be and limited



their production accordingly. Group solidarity and cohesiveness were more important goals to them than was individual accomplishment, a possibility that was overlooked by management in the latter's structuring of the work situation. Like managers in other plants, managers at Hawthorne thought they could influence the behavior of workers by controlling the factor of reward: wages. Workers, on the other hand, were able to elude control much of the time by finding rewards (group solidarity) that were outside management's perceptual field.

The relative unimportance of material rewards was also demonstrated by a series of experiments with the small team of women working on relay assemblies. The working conditions of this group were manipulated by the researchers in a number of different ways during the four-and-one-half years they were observed. The results of the experimentation were puzzling: production rose irrespective of whether working conditions were improved (by increasing the number and length of rest periods, for example) or worsened (eliminating rest periods, for example). When the women were asked about the reasons for their higher production, they reported themselves somewhat at a loss to explain it. They knew they were more productive, yet somehow it was easier to produce more in the experimental situation than it was to produce less in the regular work situation. They reported that it was "more fun" to work in the special group, and they also liked being away from the surveillance of their usual supervisors.

There were, in addition, some other differences that appeared to contribute to the increased production. For one thing, they were consulted by the top supervisor before any change was put into effect. For another, they were able to talk freely among themselves, something they had been unable to do in their regular work situation. They were also taken

off piecework and were paid a flat wage, no matter how much or how little they produced. What seemed to be most important to the researchers, however, was the fact that the women realized that they were taking part in an important experiment. This increased their interest in their job. They received a great deal of attention and, as we noted in Chapter 2, the need for attention is a strong motivating force.

The differences between the former working conditions of these women and those of the experimental situation can be summed up in a word: consideration. These women were receiving more consideration of their needs and interests as individuals than they were in their former work situation. The experimenters had unconsciously arranged a situation that met more of the workers' psychological and social needs than had the situation in which they usually worked.

During the years that followed the Hawthorne study, and particularly during World War II, the interest in developing employer-employee policies based on a "human relations" approach grew, particularly among psychologists and sociologists concerned with industrial situations. We shall have more to say in Chapter 17 about some of this research and the techniques that have been developed to implement its findings, but for the present we will direct our attention to the controversy that has emerged between the proponents of the "consideration" approach, based on the Hawthorne study and similar research, and the proponents of "structure initiation."

### *The International Harvester study*

One of the organizations that made use of "human relations" training programs for its supervisory personnel was the International Harvester Company. The program at International Harvester was focused on foremen, because it was felt that the attitudes and

behavior of supervisors at this level would have maximum impact on morale, worker satisfaction, and, of course, production.

During the time that this training program was under way, the Personnel Research Board of the Ohio State University was engaged in studying supervisory effectiveness at International Harvester. Psychologists employed by the Board were interested in two patterns of supervisory leadership, one termed "consideration" and the other "structure initiation." Consideration patterns of behavior are consistent with democratic, permissive, considerate, and person-oriented attitudes, whereas behavior concerned with the initiation of structure tends to be consistent with organizing, planning, directing, and criticizing attitudes. The behavioral descriptions listed in Table 16-2 are largely consistent with a structure-initiation style.

The leader who is oriented toward consideration is concerned primarily with meeting the psychological and emotional needs of the members of the group, whereas the leader who is primarily oriented toward structure initiation is concerned with getting the job done. Although the two dimensions appear to be opposites, they are, in fact, independent, correlating  $-.01$ . This means that they are not mutually exclusive and that a leader can display attitudes that are strongly oriented toward consideration, strongly oriented toward structure initiation, or neither, or both (Stogdill & Coons, 1957).

The Personnel Research Board undertook an evaluation of the special training that International Harvester foremen were receiving. Their findings were not very reassuring for those who had hoped that special courses of this nature would bring about real changes in the values and behavior of supervisory personnel. The researchers, Fleishman, Harris, and Burtt (1955), administered attitude questionnaires before and after the special two-week training period, with a follow-up two to ten

months later. They found that attitudes did, in fact, move in the direction of "consideration" and away from "structure initiation" during the training period, but that the effect did not last. After a few months back on the job, the foremen rated *lower* in consideration and *higher* in structure initiation than they had before the special training. This effect, furthermore, was confirmed by reports of the foremen's behavior, as given anonymously by their subordinates. Some of the foremen also were given a one-week "refresher" course in human relations some time after they had been back at the plant. As far as the researchers could determine, this had little effect on their attitudes, and their behavior, if anything, moved in the direction of more structure initiation.

As the researchers probed more deeply into the problem, they found that foremen worked in basically two kinds of situations. Foremen on production lines, where they were required to meet schedules, tended to be more oriented toward structure initiation and to work under supervisors who also favored structure initiation. Furthermore, production foremen who received highest ratings from their supervisors tended to score high on structure initiation and low on consideration. Foremen in jobs that were not concerned with production (stores, inspection, and maintenance) tended to score high on consideration and low on structure initiation and worked under supervisors who scored in the same direction. Workers, as might be expected, tended to prefer foremen who rated high in consideration and low in structure initiation. Furthermore, there was more absenteeism and a higher number of grievances filed in the departments headed by foremen who scored high in structure initiation.

The researchers concluded that human relations training has little effect, if trainees go back to work for supervisors who are more concerned with production than with human relations; hence, any real change in attitudes

in an organization must start with the top people. They also concluded, however, that the leader who is preoccupied with morale (consideration) may be less efficient than one who is preoccupied with production. If production and morale are *both* important considerations, it appears as though leaders must initiate structure and be considerate at the same time. The effectiveness of a combination of consideration and structure initiation has since been confirmed by Michael Beer (1966), who conducted a survey of some fifteen thousand employees of a large insurance company and found that a supervisor who was perceived as considerate by his subordinates could effectively increase their initiative by initiating more structure in his dealings with them.

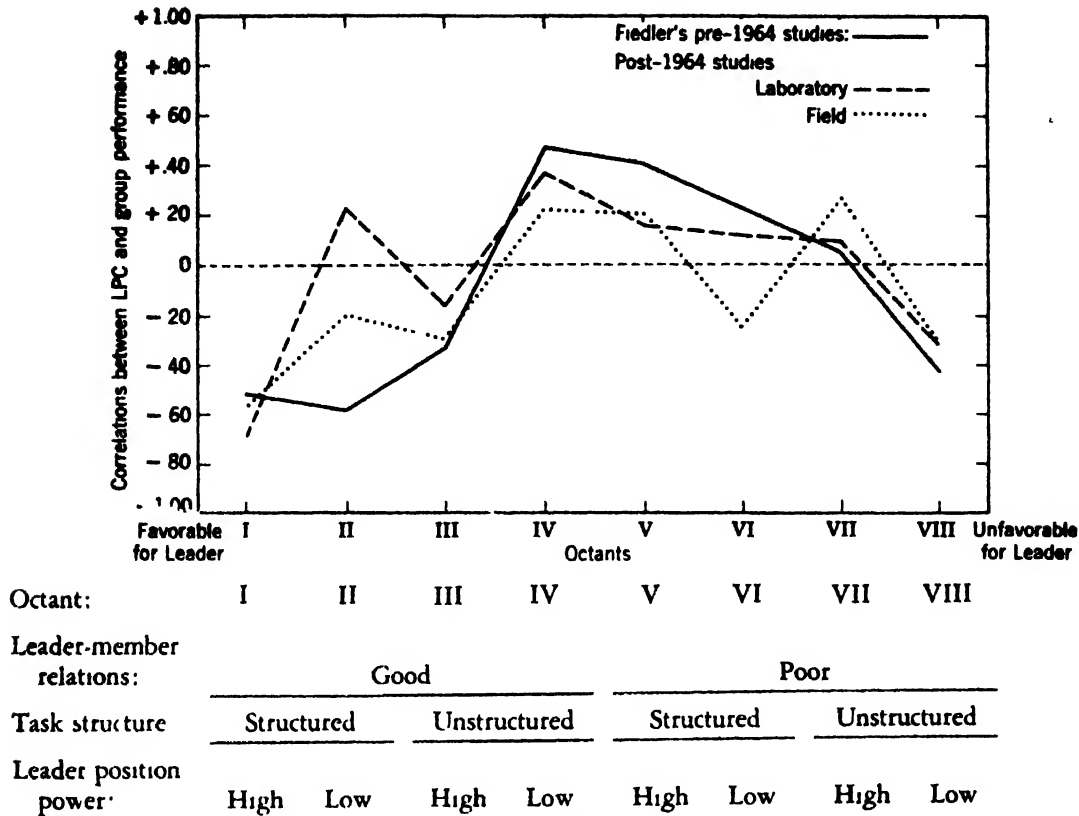
### *Leaders' attitudes toward their "least preferred co-workers"*

Fiedler's research showing that more efficient groups are characterized by some degree of social distance between leaders and the people they supervise tends to support the idea that structure initiation is necessary if production groups are to function efficiently. Psychological or social distance is an important factor in structuring groups, and the leader who takes steps to initiate a structure that maintains a considerable degree of distance is evidently the type employers prefer as a production-line foreman.

Fiedler (1965) has refined his methods of measuring psychological distance by reducing them to two statistics: (a) a measure of the difference the leader perceives between his most and his least preferred co-worker in the group; and (b) the degree to which he regards his least preferred co-worker favorably. The two measures are virtually interchangeable. In general, a leader who is primarily consideration-oriented tends to perceive his least preferred co-worker in a favorable light, and perceives little difference between his most

and his least preferred co-workers. A leader primarily oriented to structure initiation, on the other hand, tends to have negative feelings about his least preferred co-worker and perceives great differences between him and his most preferred co-worker. The leader's evaluation of the least preferred group member is represented in Fiedler's research by the LPC score, which, of course, would be high for leaders oriented primarily toward consideration and low for those oriented primarily to structure initiation.

Fiedler studied the performance of some 800 different task groups and found that leaders who have low LPC scores generally turn out to be more effective. He also found, however, that it is important to take into account the leader's relations with group members, the degree to which the task is structured or made highly specific, and the amount of power possessed by the leader. Fiedler has broken down these three conditions into nine different arrangements, which he has ranked in terms of the extent to which they work out to the advantage of the leader. The most favorable situation is one in which the leader has good relations with his group, has been assigned a highly structured problem, and has a high degree of power. Although he has everything his own way in such a situation, his chances for success can be compromised if he has a high LPC score, as Figure 16-1 shows. Leaders low in LPC—that is, who were controlling, active, and oriented to structure initiation—tended to be more effective in most kinds of work situations. Leaders high in LPC—that is, who were permissive or merely nondiscriminative—tended to be more effective under only two conditions, one in which leader-group relations were good, task structure low, and the leader's power weak, and the other in which the leader's power was poor, the task structure high, and the leader's power high. The relationship was approximately zero



**Figure 16-1.** Medians of correlations between leaders' LPC scores and the performance of their groups, classified by octants according to the conditions prevailing (Fiedler, 1971b).

between the leader's LPC and group effectiveness in situations in which leader-group relations were poor, the task structure low, and the leader's power high.

Fiedler's model (the solid line in Figure 16-1) has been criticized by George Graen and others (1970), who reported that a number of laboratory studies, including their own, not only fail to confirm the relationships predicted but found no correlations higher than .20 for any of the octants.

Fiedler (1971a) has rebutted these criticisms by analyzing the experiments in question and comparing them with a number of other experiments and field studies that have been con-

ducted since the 1964 statement of his model. The median correlations for these later studies are indicated by the dashed line (experiments) and the dotted line (field studies) in Figure 16-1. As Fiedler points out, the field-study findings lie fairly close to the predictions of the model. The laboratory studies also conform fairly well, with greatest differences being in Octant II. According to Fiedler, the failure of Graen and others (1970) to confirm his model is partly due to their having used laboratory studies, in which conditions (leader-member relations, task structure, and leader power) were not manipulated sufficiently to reproduce those specified by the model. An additional problem

with laboratory research is that experimenters must select subjects at random to serve as leaders, whereas in natural situations, leaders are more likely to have some personal qualifications before they are appointed or elected. Edward P. Hollander and James W. Julian (1969) also complain about laboratory experiments in leadership that are "methodologically sophisticated but bear only a pale resemblance to the leadership enterprise that engages people in persisting relationships" [pp. 394-395].

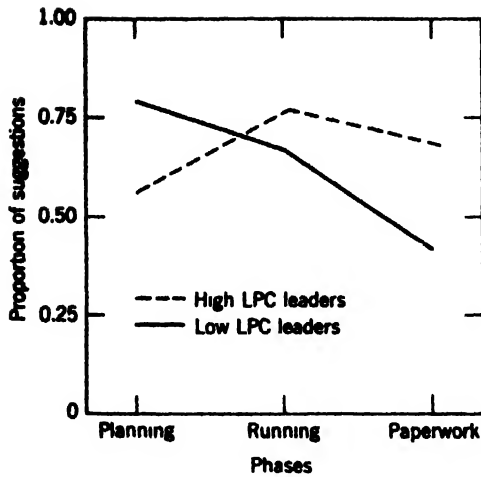
Fiedler acknowledges that the concept underlying his model has complexities that were not apparent during earlier stages of his research. For example, it now seems desirable to explore differences between groups that exist primarily for the benefit of the organization (e.g., typical work or task groups) and those that exist for the benefit of the individual (e.g., groups of trainees). Organizational groups appear to follow the model more than do trainee groups.

A glance at Figure 16-1 will show that most of the correlations, both for the model and for the field studies, are in the negative direction—the leaders with the low LPC scores tend to have the most effective groups. This general relationship has been subjected to cross validation by John A. Sample and Thurlow R. Wilson (1965), who devised an ingenious method for putting it to the test. Fourteen teams composed of undergraduate students taking a course in experimental psychology were formed, six of them headed by student leaders who rated low in LPC and eight by leaders who rated high. Teams were assigned ten problems in operant conditioning of rats which they were to complete over a two-month period. Grades were assigned to team members in accordance with the performance of their teams. The eighth assignment in the series was given under stress conditions, in that the 90 minutes allowed was 15 minutes less than the time

allowed for routine assignments. Furthermore, this assignment was given extra weight in determining final marks for the course. Groups headed by the low-LPC leaders did slightly better work during the routine assignments, but the difference was not statistically significant. On the stress assignment, however, the difference in favor of the low-LPC leaders was significant.

Sample and Wilson broke each team's task into three phases. The chief difference between high- and low-LPC leaders appeared during the initial or planning phase, in which low-LPC leaders gave more direction and stimulated more task-oriented discussion among their subordinates than did high-LPC leaders. The high-LPC leaders, on the other hand, spent a higher percentage of time during the planning phase in positive socioemotional behavior, that is, making and eliciting comments that were supportive, reassuring, and group building. During the next phase of the problem, when the rat was actually being conditioned, the amount of direction given by low-LPC leaders was actually less than that given by high-LPC leaders, whereas their positive socioemotional responses were higher. During the third or paperwork phase of the problem, the number of suggestions given by low-LPC leaders continued to decrease, whereas those of high-LPC leaders tended to increase (see Figure 16-2).

The general behavior pattern of the two types of leaders was, therefore, reversed. The low-LPC leader tended to concentrate more of his direction and control of the group during the planning phase and was more relaxed and even jovial, during the running of the experiment and the subsequent preparing of the report, whereas the high-LPC leader tended to spend the planning phase in building good group feeling. As a result, the experiment was not as well planned and he was forced to do more directing and organizing during the latter two phases of the experiment. The two types



**Figure 16-2** Differences in proportions of suggestions given by high-LPC (considerate, permissive) leaders and low-LPC (structuring, dominating) leaders during three phases of a laboratory assignment conducted under stress conditions (Sample & Wilson, 1965).

of leaders obviously perceived the task differently: the low-LPC leader correctly perceived the task as one demanding careful planning and, therefore, concentrated on this phase of the work. Once the job had been properly planned, he was able to relax and be more sociable. The high-LPC leader tended to see the task as an opportunity to socialize and used much of his planning time accordingly. When the time came to run the experiment, the group was less well prepared and somewhat disorganized. These different styles of perception and group functioning made little difference during routine assignments, because stress was minimal and there was enough time to make the necessary adjustment and corrections to turn out an acceptable job. During the stress problem, however, the superior planning of the low-LPC leader made itself evident, whereas the relatively poor planning of the high LPC leader resulted in a poor performance. Still another

problem encountered by the high-LPC leaders was control of the group during the paperwork phase of the problem. Each group member had a separate assignment during this phase, and, when the paperwork was done in a large classroom, the team members moved apart in order to work on their chores. During the stress problem, however, team members were forced to work in close proximity in a small room. Under such conditions, members of groups led by leaders high in LPC had more difficulty in refraining from socializing than did those led by low-LPC leaders.

The results of Sample and Wilson's experiment support Fiedler's findings and are consistent with those of the International Harvester study. Actually, they are not inconsistent with the Hawthorne study. All three studies seem to show that consideration and high LPC did not interfere with group performance of routine tasks, and the latter two studies indicate that morale is higher if the leader is considerate. Under such conditions, work requires a minimum amount of attention, and socialization not only does not interfere, but makes the task situation more enjoyable. Thus the employer gains in terms of production and the employee gains in terms of social rewards. It is primarily under stress situations that the difficulty occurs. When time is short and the demands for production are high, as on the assembly line in a tractor factory or in an experiment that has to be completed in 15 minutes less than the usual time, socialization must be put aside and the entire group must become task-oriented. It is at such times that the high-LPC leader has difficulty in shifting into a new set of roles. Furthermore, the group that has been strongly oriented toward socialization also has difficulty in reorienting its goals. Presumably, a leader who rates high on both structure initiation and consideration has less difficulty under both routine and stress conditions. Group members are more willing to take their

cues from such a leader and accept his restructuring of the situation during stress conditions. High-LPC leaders evidently tend to be people who are unable to anticipate the nature of stress situations and to organize their groups accordingly. They have a more limited repertory of roles and may feel awkward and ill-at-ease in actively directing their groups. Very likely some of this uneasiness communicates itself to group members and adds to the confusion.

It should be noted that the leaders of groups studied by Sample and Wilson were psychology students who were used to operating in permissive situations, such as those that prevail in academic environments. The low-LPC leaders, being aware of norms that emphasize benign attitudes on the part of authority figures and sanction punitive ones, were perhaps not as likely to express negative behavior as are, say, foremen of tractor assembly lines. They were, furthermore, working with teams of peers, and their power was low. Very likely the situation corresponded to the second degree of favorableness for leaders, according to Fiedler's scheme, as illustrated in Figure 16-1—that is, a situation characterized by good leader-group relations, high task structure, and weak leader power. The results tended to confirm Fiedler's thesis that such an arrangement would be more favorable to low-LPC leaders than to high ones.

An analysis of group feeling conducted by Sample and Wilson showed that there was little difference in the way that high- and low-LPC leaders were regarded by team members. Low-LPC leaders were perceived as stimulating more ideas than high-LPC leaders, but there was no difference in the way members perceived the two kinds of leaders in terms of the latter's attempts to increase cooperation and criticize constructively. Contrary to what might be supposed, there was no difference in the total amount of positive socioemotional behavior displayed by the two types of leaders. Both types of leaders were friendly to their

group members, but expressed this friendliness at different times during the assigned tasks. It was not the occurrence of positive behavior that distinguished between the two kinds of leaders, but rather their timing of such behavior.

The importance of considerate behavior on the part of the leader should not, therefore, be minimized. The leader's ability to structure the task and to direct the work of his subordinates may be the prime factor in group success in most problem situations, but low cohesiveness and morale can be destructive to the efforts of even the best leaders. Fiedler and W.A. T. Meuwess (1963) studied the behavior of Army tank crews, B-20 bomber crews, antiaircraft artillery crews, and creative discussion groups to determine the relationship between intelligence and group performance. They found that the leader's intelligence was positively correlated with performance in cohesive, but not in uncohesive, groups. In Army tank crews, furthermore, the intelligence of all the members of the task group was correlated positively with proficiency in cohesive, but not in uncohesive, groups.

The need for consideration is especially noticeable in cross-cultural settings. Martin M. Chemers (1969) conducted a field study of Americans living in Iran, who were trained to deal with cross-cultural problems. His hypothesis that low-LPC leaders would come to show more consideration than high-LPC leaders, as a result of the training, was confirmed. Evidently, once low-LPC leaders see the need for consideration and learn how to express it in a strange culture, they are better able to do this than are high-LPC leaders. An incidental finding was that whereas Americans' perceptions of the leaders divided into the two usual factors, structure initiation and consideration, Iranians merged the two and saw not two types of leadership, but one type with both characteristics.

In concluding this portion of our discussion of structure initiation, consideration, and LPC, it is worth noting that the findings are consistent with the two basic leadership functions that Bales (1965) found in his group studies, namely, task-orientation and social-emotional support. Both types of leadership are needed for effective group functioning. In groups that are functioning adequately, one of two types of situations is likely to occur. (a) the social-emotional needs of the groups are met by their acceptance of a task-oriented leader, or (b) an auxiliary leader—what Bales calls a “social specialist”—is helping the group meet its social-emotional needs.

### *Facilitating Social Learning*

A leader, as we have noted, is someone who influences behavior. This proposition can be restated as: a leader is someone who induces learning. Inasmuch as changes in the individual's behavior induced or initiated by changes in the environment constitute a major type of learning, and inasmuch as the leader is an agent of the social environment, the leader's role is that of organizer or director of learning; a teacher. Even the leader's task in establishing himself as a source of influence is a problem in inducing learning, because he must get his subordinates to develop (learn) a set whereby they will respond to his cues.

The leader's overall, global role as an instigator of learning may be subdivided or classified into a number of subroles, which we shall discuss separately.

#### *The leader as a model*

In Chapter 4 we discussed how learners make use of the behavior of other members of the group as a model for their own. This form of learning is particularly important for the

development of social norms and is, as Bandura and Walters (1962) point out, the chief way in which behavior that has not been in the repertory of the learner is acquired. Leaders play a key role in such learning, partly because they are the most visible members of their groups and partly because their concern with group goals leads them to make special efforts to see that members, particularly new ones, learn the behavioral norms that contribute to the group effort. Leaders are able to bring about this kind of learning because group members have permitted them to become influential, because they have endowed them, in effect, with prestige.

The special advantage enjoyed by prestige figures in playing modeling roles has been studied by Robert N. Vidulich and Gerald A. Bayley (1966), who asked a confederate to serve as an experimenter and to sit near a subject in a casual social setting (a university coffee shop, a lounging room in the university field house, or a bench in front of the university library). After the experimenter introduced himself as “Dr. Johnson of the English Department” (high status) or “Bob Johnson, a graduate student in English,” (low status) he produced a book of cartoons which he showed one at a time to the subject. The first five cartoons were used to determine the naive subject's general reactivity to cartoons. During the second phase, the experimenter laughed loudly at each of five cartoons. The reaction of subjects was rated on an “Amusement Rating Scale,” with scores ranging from “1” (no reaction or negative reaction) to “7” (high-intensity laugh) by a group of judges who observed the experimenter and the subject from a short distance. The results in two sets of similar experiments showed that subjects were significantly more responsive to the laughter cues of the experimenter when he represented himself as having high status than when he represented himself as having low status.



In another experiment involving the use of confederates, members of college sorority pledge classes participated in operant conditioning trials together with two members who had been previously instructed to give certain kinds of responses. In half the groups, the confederates were officers of the sorority (high status) and in the other half, they were chosen at random from the members of the group (low status). Subjects were tested in groups of ten, consisting of eight naive subjects and two confederates, and were told that each was to utter a single word, any word, when her turn came. The confederates uttered "animal" words in some blocks of trials and "human" words in others. Results showed that the naive subjects learned the critical responses more quickly when the confederates were officers than when the confederates were members without special status (Knapp & Knapp, 1966).

### *The leader as a participant*

A leader's ability to influence group members is subject to a number of conditions and qualifications. In our discussion of LPC, we noted that both group cohesiveness and the clarity and structure of tasks are important. A leader may exert influence merely because he is known to have status and prestige with other groups, but if his position is perceived as relevant to the group in question, his attempt to influence will have more meaning. To put this in other terms, a leader who is an outsider will, in general, have less influence than a leader who is perceived as a functioning member of the group.

This point is brought out in an experiment in which psychologists compared the performance of groups headed by leaders who participated with those whose leaders did not do so. Malcolm G. Preston and Roy K. Heintz (1949) organized discussion groups composed of four and five college students and asked each group to elect a leader. Half the leaders were instructed to participate with their groups in

problem solving and the other half were instructed to supervise their groups, but not to participate in the problem-solving process. Participatory leaders were more effective in getting group consensus than were nonparticipatory leaders, and were also more able to bring about changes in the attitudes of group members, changes that paved the way for the solution of the assigned problems. Furthermore, members of groups led by participatory leaders were more pleased with their work, more inclined to find the assigned task interesting, and more likely to regard themselves as effective workers.

### *The leader's effect on self-regarding attitudes*

We noted in Chapter 10 how membership in a group leads individuals to take on certain patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting, which may eventually assume a certain degree of permanence and stability to the point where they may be considered as personality traits. Leaders, too, may bring about such changes, partly because they are highly visible as models, and partly because their statements and representations have the general effect of group pronouncements—that is, an opinion stated by a leader is often given a weight approaching that of the entire group membership, inasmuch as the leader is taken to represent the group. The leader, as we have pointed out, symbolizes and epitomizes the group and may frequently serve as their agent.

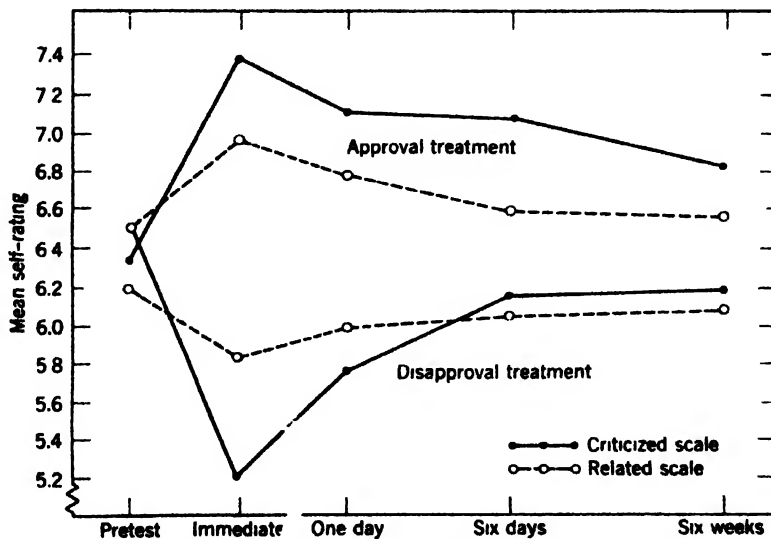
In Chapter 4 we discussed research by Ellis Batten Page (1958) which showed that the amount of attention given by an authority figure—a teacher—had a significant effect on the work of students. The more extensive and personal the comment written by the teacher on the quiz paper of the student, the more responsive the student. Teachers' comments, like those of other persons in authority, generally have a high reward value.

This point was also demonstrated by a study conducted by Harold I. Haas and Martin H. Maehr (1965), who asked eighth grade boys to rate themselves on a questionnaire dealing with coordination and motor skill. The boys were then observed by a group of adult judges as they went through their paces in a "physical development test," first as a group, and then individually. The judges, who had been introduced as "physical development" experts, then expressed disapproval or praise about one aspect of each boy's performance. When the boys filled out the questionnaire a second time, the comments of the judges tended to be reflected in the scale or part of the questionnaire appropriate to the skill that had been praised or criticized, and there was an additional effect on related scales. This effect tended to persist, as shown by measures administered to the boys one day, six days, and six weeks after the experimental treatment, as Figure 16-3 shows.

### *Effect of the group on the leader*

A major difference between members of traditionally oriented cultures and members of those that espouse democratic values is the conviction of the latter that almost anyone can learn the skills of leadership. This attitude, which appeared in Europe during the late medieval period, is in contradistinction to older ideas that leadership skills are instinctive or can only be inherited. "As part of their conflict with the feudal nobility, the bourgeoisie supported a conception of leadership as learnable behavior which, through thought, discussion, and rational organization, could master the social process. In this sense, then, leadership was accessible to all men of will and intellect..." (Gouldner, 1951). The assumption that leadership is the result of a learned process is also basic to the work of modern social scientists.

The learning of leadership is to a large extent a matter of learning the roles, values, attitudes,



**Figure 16-3.** Effect of praise or disapproval by "physical development experts" on the self-ratings of eighth grade boys, with respect to specific and related types of skills commented upon by the judges. (Haas & Maehr, 1965. Copyright © 1955 by the American Psychological Association.)

and perceptions that go with the position of leader in the group. In this chapter we have dealt with these topics largely from the standpoint of the leader, who exhibits certain kinds of behavior in order to influence others. We should also note, however, that there is a reciprocal effect: groups influence leaders, just as leaders influence groups. As George C. Homans (1961) has put it: "influence over others is purchased at the price of allowing one's self to be influenced by others" [p. 286]. A leader learns the techniques and behavior style of leadership through being reinforced by his success in influencing others. This process takes place through the data that are fed back to the leader through whatever channels are available. Leaders have perhaps a common tendency to reduce the amount of this feedback and to regard it as distracting or even irrelevant, and this tendency suggests that leaders are as reluctant to be influenced (to learn) as anyone else. Learning, as we have noted elsewhere, involves changes that may have an effect on the self-structure, and we ordinarily prefer to remain as we are.

There are other reasons why leaders avoid being evaluated. Evaluating subordinates is consistent with the role of leaders, but subordinates are not ordinarily expected to evaluate leaders, except very indirectly or among themselves and not publicly. Open criticism of leaders is generally considered detrimental to cohesiveness and is usually indulged in only when a dissident segment of the group has decided that it is necessary to change leaders in order to attain or to change the goals of the group. Such behavior may, of course, differ with respect to the climate prevailing in a group: the more democratic the group, the more criticism of the leader is likely to be tolerated, and the more traditional and authoritarian the group, the more it is likely to be suppressed. The study of American, Canadian, and

Arab attitudes toward authority figures we discussed earlier supports this observation. Americans are more openly critical of authority figures than Canadians are. A college professor in Canada, for example, is generally treated with more deference than one in an American college. And Arabs are considerably more deferential and less publicly critical of authority figures than are Canadians. The more private beliefs, as expressed on sentence-completion tests, were, as we pointed out, in essentially negative relationship to the public behavior we have just described, with Americans' responses being the most accepting, and Arabs' responses being the least accepting, of persons in authority (Lindgren & Lindgren, 1960; Sallery & Lindgren, 1966). The differences in behavior toward leaders are, of course, differences of degree, rather than of kind. Leaders may be treated with less deference in face-to-face situations in the United States, in contrast to the treatment they get in Canada or the Middle East, but even in the United States they usually receive more deference than is accorded other group members. The picture is somewhat complicated by the fact that there are channels existing in all these countries whereby criticism can be directed against leaders. The public press offers one such channel of communication. Members of some labor unions, professional societies, and college faculties also feel freer than most members of society to criticize their leaders openly.

In spite of these occasional outbursts of criticism, there is nevertheless a rather general tendency for group members to exercise some restraint in criticizing leaders. This attitude may arise from a fear of incurring the ill will either of the leader himself or his supporters, or it may derive at times from a desire to protect the leader from unpleasant experiences. Such attitudes are of course, more widespread in groups characterized by an authoritarian struc-

ture. This situation is often decried by democratically oriented leaders, who state publicly that they would like to improve their leadership skills and would encourage open discussion and even criticism in order to effect that end. True, it is often difficult to get group members to respond to such pleas, for they are naturally wary of promises not to take retributive action, and leaders have been known to behave defensively when their invitation to criticize has been accepted. The only device that seems to provide the maximum information and the maximum protection for the communicator is the anonymous questionnaire. Some business firms maintain "suggestion boxes" in order to provide a channel for such communication; others employ consultants to conduct "morale studies" in order to pick up deficiencies in leadership and other problems. Little is known, however, about the effectiveness of such methods. They are obviously a way whereby the group can influence the behavior of their leaders, but are the leaders teachable?

One study that suggests that persons in authority can be influenced by feedback from their subordinates is an experiment conducted by Gage, Runkel, and Chatterjee (1963), in which approximately 3900 sixth graders rated their teachers, as well as an "ideal teacher," on a twelve-item scale. To insure anonymity, their replies were sent directly to the Bureau of Educational Research at the University of Illinois. Each teacher was also asked to fill out a questionnaire describing herself, using the same twelve categories, and also describing how she thought the average student would describe her. A few weeks later, half the teachers received a report summarizing the ratings of their students; the other half of the teachers served as a control group and received their reports only when the term was over. Approximately five weeks after the first group of teachers had received the feedback report, the

researchers asked both groups of the students, those in the control and experimental groups alike, to rate their teachers again.

Results showed that teachers in the experimental group had improved in ten out of the twelve categories of behavior rated. The most significant changes were in willingness to praise students for something said in a class discussion, in explaining arithmetic more clearly, in using examples drawn from pupils' experience, and in asking the class what they thought of something that had been said (a device used to encourage group participation in discussion).

The authors of the study concluded that teacher behavior could be influenced by feedback and that its susceptibility to such influence could be explained in terms of consonance theory. In other words, a teacher who believes that her pupils would perceive her behavior as fairly close to ideal, and who then discovers through the feedback process that they do not, is faced by the need to make some kind of adjustment in order to bring her perceptions of her pupils, her behavior, and herself back into balance. If she feels that they have misjudged her, she will try to convince them of their error; if she feels that they are correct, then she will have to think less of herself. The most practical way of reducing the strain is to change her behavior in a direction that will come closer to their ideal and that will thus enable her to be more accepting of her own behavior.

### *Summary*

A leader is a group member who influences other members to behave in ways he prefers more than they influence him. This type of influence usually occurs within the structure of a social system and tends to contribute to its stability. Leadership refers to the attributes of

a position in the social structure, the characteristics of a person, and a category of behavior. The significance of the position of a leader is shown by a study demonstrating that individuals who are assigned to leadership positions on a random basis will try to influence groups, and that groups will tend to let themselves be influenced. Some leaders are not officially identified, yet must be considered such because of their influence.

The influence of a leader is his power, and the amount of power he has depends in part on his prestige. There is a tendency for people who play leadership roles in one context to play them in others as well. The greater the similarity between such situations, the greater the likelihood of their playing such roles.

Types of leaders include the administrator (planning, coordinating, managing, directing, organizing), the bureaucrat (maintenance and supervision of organizational operations), the policy maker, the expert (commentator, critic, special resources), the ideologist (theories, beliefs), the charismatic leader (emotional appeal), the political leader, the symbolic leader, and the parent figure. The leader can also serve as a target for the group's resentment and hostility, and blame. Americans tend to be more open in their expression of hostility toward leaders than do people in more traditional cultures, but some studies using projective tests suggest that Americans may actually be more genuinely accepting of leaders.

Leaders are likely to rate higher in intelligence, dominance, adjustment, psychological adjustment, and activity within groups, than are nonleaders. They also tend to be freer from the normative pressures of the group than most members are.

There is a controversy between two schools of thought in leadership research. One approach emphasizes consideration, and the other emphasizes task orientation, structure

initiation, and social distance. Data from the Hawthorne study conducted some forty years ago tend to support the consideration position; however, a more recent set of studies conducted at the International Harvester Company shows that the style of leadership is likely to depend in part on the demands of the situation. Supervisors in production work tended to emphasize structure initiation, whereas supervisors in nonproduction work tended to be characterized by consideration in their dealings with subordinates. More recent work by Fiedler shows that leaders who are task-oriented, and who maintain some degree of psychological distance between themselves and their subordinates, are better able to see differences between their most and least preferred co-workers, whereas leaders who are consideration-oriented see little difference. An analysis of a wide number of work situations, showing different degrees of task structure, leader power, and favorability in leader-group relations, has produced a model that is essentially a curvilinear relationship between least preferred co-worker (LPC) scores and group effectiveness, with most of the correlations favoring the low-LPC leader—that is, the one who is the most task-oriented. Although a number of laboratory studies have failed to confirm the validity of the model, it seems to be fairly consistent with what one finds in field studies. The tendency of low-LPC leaders to be more effective has been cross-validated with a study involving teams of students conducting experiments in a psychological laboratory. In general, research on these two dimensions adds up to the conclusion that task groups need task-oriented leaders, but that group members must also have some way of obtaining social-emotional rewards from their work if morale is not to suffer.

The leader's task in influencing behavior may be conceived of as that of inducing learning.

Leaders are able to carry out this function by serving as models for behavior and by participating in the activities of the group. Leaders may also have a significant influence on the way in which group members regard themselves. There is a tendency for leaders not to encourage evaluation of their own behavior on the

part of their subordinates, and the general practice is for group members to withhold criticism—at least on a face-to-face basis. Some research shows, however, that the behavior of leaders can be influenced by such evaluation, once the channels of communication have been opened to such feedback.



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# Chapter 17

## Psychological Processes in Organizations

### ***Organizational Structure***

#### ***Characteristics of organizations***

The relationship between organizations and leaders is circular and reciprocal: leaders develop organizations and organizations develop leaders. Leaders play organizing roles in social systems to satisfy their own personal needs as well as the expectations of their followers, and when people come together to form groups for this or that purpose, they are likely to find or create the leadership they require. The result of this interaction between people's need to accomplish something and leadership is an organization.

Organizations, according to Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn (1966), are social devices for accomplishing some stated purpose efficiently



through group means. Organizations are perceived by them as open systems, a concept that psychologists have borrowed from biology. Any organism can be considered as an energy system which has inputs, transformation processes, and outputs. Inputs in an organization consist of the raw material that is processed and turned into products of some kind. The raw material for the adjustment section of an insurance company would consist of insurance claims; the output would consist of claims that had been settled. The transformation processes would consist of the use and application of specialized information and talents, legal processes, negotiations—whatever would be needed to satisfy a claimant and still conform to the limits and restrictions imposed by law and by company policy. The input for a university would be students, teaching materials, books, money and so forth. The transformation process would consist of lectures, assignments, study, research, discussion, counseling, and the like; and the output would be educated individuals.

Katz and Kahn also view organizations in terms of interlocking systems of social roles or as clusters of activities expected of individuals occupying certain positions in a system. These roles or activities are mutually interdependent. If the work of the organization is to be accomplished, not only do we expect people to perform the tasks that have been assigned to them, but they, in turn, also expect that others will reciprocate. In the organizations we call colleges, we expect instructors to teach, but their willingness to teach is ineffective unless students learn. The teaching of instructors and the learning of students are thus mutually dependent one on the other. To make sure that transformation processes occur in an orderly fashion, organizations develop rules and regulations, which are backed up by rewards and penalties and thus constitute the authority system for the organization. Unless participants

agree that there must be rules and that they are to be observed, organizations cannot function.

### *Bureaucracies*

Authority in modern social organizations is based on rational and legal considerations, which are, in turn, based on practical social experience. The organization that is most likely to embody the system of interlocking roles, reinforced by what Max Weber (1947) terms "rational legal authority" is the bureaucracy. Bureaucracies are inevitable and also absolutely necessary to the functioning of a complex, industrialized, and urbanized society. Nevertheless, they attract a great deal of adverse criticism from a variety of sources. Some criticize bureaucracies because they are not efficient enough. Output is too small, transformation processes take too much time, and backlogs of input are too high. Katz and Kahn are sympathetic to this complaint, and they suggest a number of ways in which organizations, including bureaucracies, may change in order to become more efficient. We shall discuss some of these changes in a separate section farther along in this chapter. Others criticize bureaucracies because they are too impersonal and thus dehumanize both the participants and the persons served. Such criticism is likely to be expressed by those who long for the kind of simplicity in interpersonal and intergroup relations that is to be found in more primitive societies, but who are unwilling to put up with the disadvantages and the monotony found in such societies. Katz and Kahn point out that bureaucratic roles do not, as popularly assumed, demand all of an individual's personality. Organizations do not generally require that the individual be married to the subsystem in which he is located, and he, therefore, has a considerable degree of choice in patterning his life as he chooses. Furthermore, a person

occupying a given position in a bureaucratic structure typically plays a number of different roles on and off the job. Almost everyone in an urbanized culture like ours functions in a number of different organizations, some of which are bureaucracies, and some of which are less formally organized.

The problem of modern man is not that bureaucracies keep him from being human, but that he can become human in so many different ways. It is the availability of so many different choices that creates dilemmas for man in an urbanized society, rather than the lack of choices. The freedom to choose among several options may at times create feelings of anxiety and panic, to the point where the individual comes to believe that he is trapped in a choiceless situation. What this usually means, however, is that the individual is trying to cope with his anxiety by distorting the reality of the situation and is unable to perceive the options that actually are available to him.

### *Types of organizations*

A description of the kinds of organizations that are likely to emerge in a complex society may be helpful here, if only to illustrate the importance of the functions they fulfill. Katz and Kahn recognize four major types: productive (or economic), maintenance, adaptive, and managerial or political.

Productive or economic organizations are the kind that most obviously fit the open system model. These are the organizations that manufacture goods, provide services to the general public or a segment thereof, and create wealth. They carry on activities like farming and mining, manufacturing and processing, and communication and services. Their output supplies needs for food, shelter, clothing, and recreation, and provides the rewards and incentives that lead people to behave in ways that keep the social order functioning.

Maintenance organizations do not maintain society's equipment, but its members, instead. They are devoted to the socialization of people. Schools and churches are maintenance organizations that perform the functions of education, indoctrination, and training. So do publishing houses and the mass media, although their primary role places them among the productive or economic organizations. A second group of organizations cares for the restorative function and provides health and welfare activities, as well as reform and rehabilitation.

Adaptive functions are filled by social structures that create knowledge, develop and test theories, and apply information to existing problems. In this class we find research institutes and universities, as well as organizations devoted to encouraging the arts and thus helping create new concepts of experience.

Managerial or political functions are those concerned primarily with maintaining the social structure, rather than with the individual members of society. The state, as the major authority structure of society, is the key organization here. It mobilizes society against internal and external threats and provides the legal framework necessary to determine rights and responsibilities, and to protect individuals and other legal entities from one another. Included in this category are various subsystems of government, as well as political parties, pressure groups, labor unions, and organizations of professional people.

An organization may, of course, perform functions in several of these categories. A prison may produce school furniture and thus come under the heading of a productive or economic organization. It may be considered as an institution devoted to rehabilitation by some, and by others as devoted to protecting society from its enemies. And it may also be the locale for programs that use prisoners as volunteers in medical research. Its chief function, however, falls in the managerial-political

category, although most social scientists would argue that it would attain its goals more successfully if it would function more definitely as an institution of reform and rehabilitation.

## ***Psychological Needs Met through Organizations***

### ***Satisfaction in employment***

People may become involved in the work of an organization because they are interested in its objectives. A physicist may, for example, join a research institute because he is interested in doing research, and a housewife take a job as a teacher's aide because she wants to work with children. Besides these more or less personal reasons for wanting to be associated with the organization in question, there are others that are more fundamental. Participation in the activities of an organization enables the individual to become a more fully functioning member of society. It is possible, of course, to be a member of society without involvement in an organization, but an individual who participates in organizational activity is apt to be more deeply and actively involved socially. There is a trade-off of rewards and costs in this, of course. In exchange for giving his time, energy, and commitment, the individual obtains certain advantages that he could not have enjoyed otherwise. Economic power—money—is the reward most people think of, but there are other rewards as well.

Common sense and the conventional wisdom hold that people work for money. Inasmuch as such formulations are derived in an attempt to simplify, they do not conventionally probe any deeper. Hence, ardent defenders of common-sense reasoning often deny that motives other than the need for money are very important.

It may be that the idea that economic

motives are paramount stems from times of economic scarcity, before government welfare programs were instituted, when a "work or starve" ethic prevailed. In today's world, however, both regularly employed individuals and students tend to place the satisfaction of psychological needs ahead of economic ones. W.H. Penzer and I.J. Badin (1971) conducted an attitude survey of clerical employees and found that both the opportunity for advancement and satisfactions stemming from the job itself contributed more to the overall satisfaction of Negro employees than pay did, whereas for white employees, interpersonal relations on the job, satisfactions stemming from the job itself, the management and its attitudes, and the opportunity for advancement all ranked higher than pay.

In another study, Ronald J. Burke (1966a) asked college students to rank various job characteristics in terms of their importance for them. As Table 17-1 shows, "good salary" was outranked by "challenges ability, and males also rated 'opportunities for advancement' higher. Half the characteristics in the table are what Frederick I. Herzberg (1966) has termed "motivation" factors (M) and half are what he has termed 'hygiene' (H) factors. Motivational factors include such psychological needs as drives to self-actualize, to realize one's potential, and to develop a personal sense of growth. Hygiene factors are largely environmental and include wages, fair treatment by supervisors, and working conditions in general.

The effect of common-sense reasoning can be seen in Table 17-1. Although the college students tend to think of motivational characteristics as relatively important for themselves, they tend to think of such characteristics as being rated lower by others. In effect, they are saying: "I plan to work primarily for psychological motives, but, of course, *others* are interested primarily in the money."

People generally find work a satisfying

**Table 17-1.** *College Students' Rankings of "Motivation" (M) and "Hygiene" (H) Job Characteristics in Terms of Importance for Self and for Others (after Burke, 1966a, b)*

Job characteristic	Male students' rankings		Female students' rankings	
	For self	For other men	For self	For other women
Opportunity for advancement (M)	1	3	3	6
Challenges ability (M)	2	4	1	3
Good salary (H)	3	1	2	1
Job security (H)	4	2	7	4
High responsibility (M)	5	10	5	9
Importance of the job	6	6	8	7
Voice in decisions (M)	7	9	6	10
Good boss (H)	8	5	4	5
Good physical working conditions (H)	9	8	9	2
Liberal fringe benefits (H)	10	7	10	8
N	48	16	129	54

experience. Gallup polls over the last quarter of a century have shown an increase in the percentage of people reporting themselves satisfied with their work, and a decrease in those reporting themselves dissatisfied. In 1949, about two-thirds of the whites and two-fifths of the blacks were dissatisfied. During the last decade satisfaction has increased markedly. The percentage of satisfied whites in recent years has varied between 80 and 90%, and the proportion of satisfied blacks, between two-thirds and three-fourths (Gallup, 1971).

Some of the differences in satisfaction reported by blacks and whites may be due to the fact that blacks are overrepresented in lower-status jobs. The relationship between job status and job satisfaction is shown by another nationwide survey, in which about 4 out of 5 managers, professionals, technical workers, and proprietors reported themselves satisfied with their work, in contrast to about 3 out of 5 clerical, sales, and unskilled workers. The first group, furthermore, were more likely to men-

tion "ego satisfactions" in connection with their work—that is, satisfactions of Herzberg's motivation type. The second group were more likely to mention "extrinsic satisfactions"—that is, satisfactions of Herzberg's hygiene type (Gurin, Veroff, & Feld, 1960). It would thus appear that individuals with more education, and higher social status are more likely to find satisfactions through working in an organization.

Further indication of differences in the kinds of satisfactions employees at various status levels find in their work is shown by a survey conducted by W.W. Ronan (1970) among the employees of a large manufacturing firm. The questionnaires, which included 68 items that had been suggested by an employee panel, were filled out anonymously by the employees and mailed to the researcher, rather than the company. Table 17-2 consists of the ten most important sources of satisfaction for each of the three groups, ranked in order of their importance to the respondents. As the table shows,

**Table 17-2.** *Job and Company Characteristics, Ranked Anonymously in Order of Importance to Self by 11,000 Employees of a Large Manufacturing Organization (after Ronan, 1970)<sup>a</sup>*

Managerial employees	Salaried employees	Employees paid by the hour
Satisfaction from good work	Satisfaction from good work	Pay for the work done <sup>b</sup>
Performance of subordinates	Feeling of satisfaction from type of work done	Satisfaction from good work <sup>b</sup>
Contribution to company products	Cooperation among fellow workers	Feeling of satisfaction from work done
Cooperation among fellow workers	Freedom to make decisions in work	Group insurance plan
Feeling of satisfaction from type of work done	Group insurance plan	Vacation policy
Company planning for the future	Contribution to company products	Pay as compared to other companies
Morale of co-workers	Fairness of promotion procedures	Place of work
Higher management's support of supervisor	Pay for work done	Opportunity to get good equipment, supplies, and materials
Higher management's appreciation of one's work	Opportunity to use special skills and abilities	Job security
Freedom to make decisions in work	Opportunity for promotion	Company planning for the future

<sup>a</sup>Top 10 of each groups rankings, out of total list of 68

<sup>b</sup>Tied for first place.

managerial employees expressed the highest proportion of intrinsic or motivation satisfactions, followed by salaried employees. Employees paid by the hour expressed the highest proportion of extrinsic or hygiene satisfactions. It is interesting to note that pay does not appear on the managerial list, is eighth on the salaried employees' list, and is tied for first place for hourly employees.

Freedom to make decisions appears among the top ten sources of satisfaction for both the managerial and the salaried employees in Table 17-2. This is often a sensitive point in management-employee relations. Nancy Morse

(1953) found, in a survey of a sample of white-collar workers, that only 24% were satisfied with the amount of decision making they were doing, and 76% wished more.

### *Managerial satisfactions*

Even among high-status people with more than the usual amount of freedom to make decisions, there are dissatisfactions. Haire, Ghiselli, and Porter (1966) studied the extent to which managers of business organizations in a number of different countries found satisfactions in their work. As a framework for their analysis,

they used a fivefold classification of psychological needs, based on the writings of Abraham Maslow (1954) (see Chapter 5). The first two needs are largely concerned with extrinsic or hygiene-type needs; the last three relate to intrinsic or motivation-type rewards:

1. *Security*: includes both psychological and economic security—the confidence a manager has in being able to keep his job.

2. *Social*: opportunities to help others and to develop close friendships. (This would correspond closely to the need to affiliate, or *n Aff.*)

3. *Esteem*: self-esteem, as well as the prestige enjoyed inside and outside the company. (Keep in mind that prestige is a factor in the ability to influence others.)

4. *Autonomy*: authority exercised by the manager, together with his opportunity for independent thought and action.

5. *Self-actualization*: opportunity for personal growth and development, feeling of self-fulfillment, and feeling of worthwhile accomplishment.

This hierarchy of motives is ranked from the most elementary, the need for security, to the most advanced or complex, the need to actualize oneself. People who are preoccupied with lower-level needs are not likely to accomplish higher-level ones; indeed, higher-level needs may not be very strong for such people. Conversely, people who are concerned about higher-level needs are relatively unconcerned about lower-level ones, either assuming that they will be taken care of automatically as higher-level needs are satisfied, or feeling that they are of a lesser degree of importance in the total scheme of things.

It comes as no surprise to learn that the motive most likely to be unfulfilled for these managers was self-actualization. As the most "advanced" need on the hierarchy, it is the most difficult to satisfy. Some may even argue that the very nature of man makes it impossible for

him to satisfy this need. It can also be argued that such a need is likely to go unfulfilled within the context of a business organization—perhaps within *any* organization. It is also possible that the highly individualized nature of self-actualization is such that a person's resources and successes outside an organization are more significant than what happens within the organizational structure.

The researchers found a number of interesting differences between countries as to the perceptions and experiences of the managers they surveyed. As Table 17-3 shows, the most satisfied managers were found in the Scandinavian countries (Germany also rated quite high, but appears only twice in the table), whereas the least satisfied managers were in Italy and India. There are many variables that do not appear in this report, of course, not the least of which are the expectations that managers bring to a job. It may be, for example, that managers in Italy and India have higher expectations with respect to their work than do managers from the Scandinavian countries, and consequently, are more vulnerable when it comes to disappointment. Some other data gathered by the researchers show that this may be so: Indian managers felt that *all* the needs were important to them, whereas Scandinavian managers tended to downgrade the importance of the needs. Italian managers also downgraded the importance of needs, with the exception of esteem.

Cultural differences also affected managers' beliefs regarding to what extent democracy should characterize the behavior of individuals at various levels within the structure of organizations. Managers in Italy and Spain were more likely to associate the functions of deciding, creating, cooperating, persuading, directing, and reprimanding with higher-status positions. Managers in Germany, Argentina, and India made similar associations, but did not make them so strongly. In other words, the latter were more able to see that lower-status individuals might also occasionally exercise these functions.

**Table 17-3.** *Degree to Which Managers in Various Countries Perceive Their Psychological Needs as Being Fulfilled by their Work (Haire, Ghiselli, & Porter, 1966)*

Psychological needs	Highest countries	Lowest countries
Security	India (+21)* Sweden (+14)	France (-29) Italy (-16)
Social	USA (+30) Japan (+29)	Germany (-37) Italy (-33)
Esteem	Argentina (+38) Sweden (+28)	India (-35) USA (-26)
Autonomy	Sweden (+49) Germany (+35) Norway (+35)	India (-49) Italy (-44)
Self-actualization	Denmark (+34) Sweden (+30)	Italy (-59) India (-35)
Total (all needs)	Sweden (+29) Norway (+17)	Italy (-33) India (-23)

\*Scores are standard scores with a mean of 0 for each need. A plus score means that managers in that country tend to agree that their work satisfies the need in question to a higher degree than managers do in other countries sampled, whereas a minus score means the opposite—namely, that managers in that country tend to agree that their work satisfies the need in question to a lesser degree than do managers in other countries sampled.

Making mistakes was generally associated by the managers with low-status positions, but managers in the United States and England associated this with high-status positions, thus suggesting a greater willingness to hold higher-status people responsible for mistakes. One would expect, in organizations run along authoritarian lines, that the highest degree of satisfaction would be expressed by older managers and the lowest degree by younger. Data showed, however, that this condition was most likely to prevail in France, Denmark, and the United States.

### *The task-oriented individual*

Psychologists who theorize about work-derived satisfactions are inclined to say, in one way or another, that workers at whatever level are more

likely to be satisfied if they can locate the source of their satisfaction within the work itself, rather than in the environment. A.H. Maslow (1965), in his enunciation of principles of what he termed "eupsychian management," maintained that satisfactions that come out of good work relate to a primary need and not to any social or socially derived need. Daniel Katz (1964) has said that the motivation to produce (i.e., to work) and the motivation to belong (i.e., social needs) are essentially unrelated to each other.

The main point is that although organizations are social arrangements, and work carried out on their behalf takes place in social contexts and has social relevance, workers are more likely to be satisfied if their rewards are not primarily social but are located within the job itself. If

this is true, then the kind of individual who is most likely to find satisfactions in an organizational context is the one who enjoys work for its own sake: the task-oriented person.

The task-oriented type of person has been contrasted to interaction-oriented and the self-oriented types by Bernard M. Bass and George Duntzman (1963), who analyzed sociometric ratings of members of discussion groups who met in ten leaderless group sessions over a period of two weeks. One set of groups consisted of supervisors of management training from a firm of industrial consultants, and the other set were women secretaries. Individuals who scored high on task orientation were perceived as being the most valuable members of the group. They were also most likely to perform the following functions:

- Helping members express ideas.
- Helping groups stay on target.
- Helping to get to the meat of issues.
- Giving good suggestions on how to proceed.
- Providing good summaries when needed.
- Encouraging group to a high level of production.
- Taking the lead in selecting topics.
- Working hard.
- Offering original ideas.
- Sensing when to talk and when to listen.
- Influencing successfully.
- Being concerned about the group's completing its job successfully.
- Not running away when faced with problems.

Task-oriented members of supervisors' groups were also seen as providing helpful and objective feedback to members and as being easy to understand. Although task-oriented individuals were seen as being helpful in secretaries' groups, they were also perceived as making unjustified assumptions, blocking the group, dominating, imposing their will on the group, annoying others, and continuing to push a point even after being blocked repeatedly.

The secretaries agreed, however, that the removal of task-oriented members from their groups would be a loss. It appears that women who play the structure-initiating roles that are typical of task-oriented people are perceived by other women as very helpful, but such behavior is at the same time less consistent with the culturally determined expectations we have for women, and their aggressive efficiency is more likely to be resented.

Interaction-oriented members were perceived as less helpful by their groups. They were not concerned about aiding the group to complete jobs successfully, did not provide good summaries when needed, did not take the lead in selecting topics, did not help the group stay on target, and did not encourage the group to a high level of production. At the same time, they did not dominate or impose their will on groups, and interaction-oriented secretaries were seen as making others feel at ease.

There was very little consistency among self-oriented people as to the group roles they played, although there was a tendency to rate them low on helping others to feel at ease.

Task-oriented persons described themselves as self-sufficient, resourceful, with good control, aloof, introverted, not sociable, aggressive, competitive, and independent. In leadership behavior, task orientation would seem to be more closely related to structure initiation than to consideration. It is also more consistent with *n Ach* than with *n Aff*.

Interaction orientation was more characteristic of women than of men. Persons scoring high on this trait were likely to describe themselves as unaggressive, with low needs for autonomy and achievement. They also said that they would rather work in a group or volunteer for discussions than work on problems alone. Interaction-oriented people in positions of leadership would probably rate high on consideration and low on structure initiation.

Persons scoring high on self-orientation



described themselves as disagreeable, dogmatic, aggressive, competitive, sensitive, effeminate, introverted, suspicious, jealous, tense and excitable, anxious, lacking in control, fearing failure, and feeling insecure. They preferred to work alone on tasks rather than with a group.

If task orientation is, as we have suggested, positively correlated with structure initiation, the findings of Bass and Duntzman appear to be consistent with those of the Ohio State University group and of Fiedler (1965), that we discussed in Chapter 16. Although group members felt more at ease with interaction-oriented individuals, they perceived task-oriented individuals as being more helpful in aiding them to achieve their goals.

Bass and Duntzman got some further interesting results when they assigned members of supervisors' and secretaries' groups to new groups that were homogeneous with respect to the orientation of the members—that is, all persons scoring high in task orientation were assigned to one set of groups, all persons scoring high in interaction orientation to another set, and so forth. The new grouping evoked the most positive reaction from interaction members, who were now free to interact without any task-oriented person urging them to work on significant problems. The task-oriented members, conversely, felt more negative about their groups: it is difficult to lead in a group composed entirely of leaders. Their experience is somewhat reminiscent of the findings of Ghiselli (1966), discussed in Chapter 15, who reported that the most effective teams of toy railroad operators were those who had one person only who was outstanding on a significant trait. When leaders are in oversupply, they evidently get in one another's way. The self-oriented group also tended to have negative feelings about their experience and reported a high degree of conflict. This group apparently felt the lack of a task-oriented leader

to pull them together and thus resolve interpersonal tensions.

### *Organizations as Systems of Communication*

The organization has come into prominence in modern society because it is a more powerful, more effective way of meeting the needs both of individuals and society as a whole than is the collaboration of small groups. The extent to which an organization can do what is expected of it, however, depends on its ability to secure and transmit information. Even the most task-oriented employee is bound to fail if he cannot get the information he needs when he needs it, or if the information he receives is faulty.

#### *The influence of status on communication*

One of the major problems in the generation and transmission of information stems from differences in status levels. The higher an individual's position in the status hierarchy, the freer he feels to initiate messages. Unfortunately, we cannot say that freedom to initiate messages is correlated with receptivity to messages, particularly messages that emanate from below. Nor can we say that low-status persons are necessarily more responsive to communication. A low-status person generally must be receptive to messages from above, but there are practical limits to how much information a person can absorb without reacting to it in ways that are neither intended nor anticipated by the organizational authorities. As noted in Chapter 13, effective communication requires the participation of both the initiator and the receiver in order to be effective. Unless a genuine transaction has taken place, communication is not likely to influence behavior.

There are a number of ways in which low-

status people characteristically react when they are unwilling or unable to respond to messages. When orders and directions are very specific, they may sabotage the whole operation by following through meticulously and refusing to do anything that is not required of them. A nurse being treated as a "cog in the machinery" by an autocratic physician may, for example, withhold vital information about a patient's condition on the grounds that the doctor did not request her comments on the case and hence was obviously not interested in hearing them.

Another common reaction is apathy toward the job. There is an almost universal tendency for people to equate their personal worth with the work they do. When people are not free to communicate upward, they realize that their status is low and that their job is unimportant. They are, therefore, likely to find other activities in which to become involved—perhaps recreational activities on or off the job. If their attitudes have been task-oriented, they will tend to shift to interaction-oriented or self-oriented modes, or they will try to move to positions in which they have more autonomy.

Persons who find themselves at the receiving end of a one-way communication channel may also release pent-up feelings by displacing them on a scapegoat—an individual who has become the common target for group hostility. Ratebusters or ratebreakers are, as we have pointed out in other contexts, rejected by groups and thus readily qualify for the role of scapegoat. Ratebusters characteristically are highly task-oriented and unquestioningly loyal to the management of the organization. Since the norm of workers who have been isolated from communicative contact with higher status levels is likely to be that of minimum compliance, the higher output of the ratebuster is perceived by them as a deviant pattern of behavior and one that calls for punishment or harassment. Alert managements often save ratebusters from their fate by promoting them

and making them foremen or straw bosses. Such a move may satisfy the ratebuster's need for achievement and at the same time officially recognize his isolation from the group.

### *Communication and organization size*

A number of studies of different types of business organizations have shown that the size of the organization is negatively correlated with job satisfaction and productivity, and positively correlated with absenteeism, employee turnover, accident rates, and labor disputes. In other words, the larger the organization, the lower the degree of productivity and worker satisfaction, and the higher the absenteeism, the employee turnover, the accident rate, and the number of labor disputes (Porter & Lawler, 1965). A survey of the activities of members in large and small Methodist churches showed that members of smaller churches attended services more frequently, more involved in church activities, and contributed more money than members of larger churches (Wicker, 1969). It is quite possible that communication effectiveness is a factor in these differences. The larger the organization, the greater the potential number of channels of communication, and the greater the possibility for confusion. Furthermore, the larger the organization, the larger the size of work groups and the more difficult it becomes for employees to relate to one another in small groups. Since it is within the context of small, primary groups that we find our deepest satisfactions and most effective communication, one solution to the problem of efficiency and morale in large organizations would seem to be that of structuring the work in such a way that it could be performed by small groups linked together by open, two-way channels of communication. Such a reform is, of course, likely to be resisted by organizations dominated by authoritarian management, for whom centralized control has become more

vital than effectiveness and productivity. Chris Argyris (1964) observes that the policies of such organizations are likely to lead lower-status members to develop informal procedures and subsystems in order to do their jobs and at the same time find personal satisfactions. These informal structures must, of course, always be concealed from management at the next higher level. The energy used for maintaining and hiding such structures is, therefore, unavailable for the productive effort of the organization as a whole. As a consequence, the organization operates at a less-than-desirable level of efficiency and is unable to adapt itself to the social environment that daily becomes more complex, more unpredictable, and more unstable.

As Harold L. Wilensky (1970) says, "Information has always been a source of power, but now it is increasingly a source of confusion. In every sphere of modern life, the chronic condition is a surfeit of information, poorly integrated or lost somewhere in the system" [p. 57].

### *Communication and influence.*

A major factor in the problem of communication within an organization is that of the use of information as a basis for influence. A low-status position is low not only because it is hooked onto the end of a one-way communication channel, but also because persons in higher-status positions are able to influence its occupant more readily than he can influence them. The ability to communicate, therefore, implies the ability to influence. Organizational leaders probably provide one-way channels of communication not so much because they want to deprive lower-status members of the opportunity for self-expression as they want to shield themselves from that source of influence, as we noted in Chapter 16. The less influence to which leaders are exposed, the freer they are to make decisions, and the freedom to make

decisions, as we have indicated, is one of life's deeper and richer satisfactions.

What organization officials may have lost in blocking this source of influence, however, is some of the power to influence their subordinates. In one study of the relationships between 656 salesman and thirty-six branch-office managers, researchers found that the degree of control a manager was able to exercise over his salesmen was positively related to the amount of control they were able to exercise over him. Furthermore, the more control that managers and salesmen exercised over each other, the better the salesmen's performance and the greater their satisfaction with their manager (Bachman, Smith, & Slesinger, 1966). If the findings of this study can be extrapolated to other situations, it would seem that organization officials have more to gain than to lose by permitting feedback communication and thus opening up the possibility of being influenced from below. The results also suggest that the supervisor who tries to exert great influence over the behavior of his subordinates, without making it possible for them to influence him, is thereby reducing the amount of actual control he has over them. Although he governs the rewards and penalties, it is they who hold the trump cards. In the final analysis, it is their cooperation or non-cooperation that will determine whether the whole organizational effort will succeed. They can, as we noted earlier, find ways to comply with his directives without becoming productive or efficient, and many an organization has foundered because top officials were unwilling to admit or were unaware of how dependent they were on the cooperation of persons occupying low-status positions.

### *Integrating subgroups into the organization*

One of the tasks of the leadership in an organization is that of finding some way to integrate

the smaller subgroups in the organization into the larger organizational structure. People are more likely to find their social-emotional needs met in smaller, face-to-face groups than they are in a large organization. Very often these smaller work groups, such as one would find in a shop or an office, are highly cohesive and have an intense peer loyalty. This loyalty can work for an organization, if group members perceive a correlation between their goals and the goals of the organization. As Rensis Likert (1961) points out, if the behavior and attitudes of supervisors lead lower-status members to reject the organization's objectives and to work, instead, at cross purposes with top management, the result can be a drop in productivity and an increase in wastage.

The people in what is known as "middle management" play a crucial role in integrating the subgroups of organization into the main structure. They are, so to speak, the "link pins" between organizational levels. The individual at this level must be aware that he is in the middle between his subordinates and top management and must be able to relate in both directions. On the one hand, he must be able to identify with top management and their desire for production and efficiency, but on the other, he must be able to identify with employees and their desires for security, identity, and other social-emotional goals. He must, therefore, be as effective and persuasive in representing his subordinates' views to top management as he is in representing top management's interests to his subordinates.

According to Likert, the style of leadership throughout the organization is even more important than employees' attitudes toward the company and their interest in their work. He maintains that the most effective organizational leaders are those who are as concerned with human values as they are with efficiency, economy, and the effective use of technology. Likert maintains that the development of such leadership requires new patterns of manage-

ment, particularly patterns that are genuinely "participative." Without such participation, top management, middle management, and work groups are likely to become isolated, one from the other, and thus unable to communicate and work together effectively toward common goals.

### *Autonomy, productivity, and job satisfaction*

Some of Likert's ideas find support in a study conducted by Nancy C. Morse and Everett Reimer (1956), who compared the effect of centralizing and decentralizing the decision-making process in an industrial organization that had four parallel divisions engaged in routine clerical work. Two divisions were included in the Hierarchical experimental condition, in which upper-management personnel were given a more active role in making decisions. The other two divisions were included in the Autonomy program, which was designed to give the rank-and-file employees a more active role in the making of decisions. Measures administered before and after the inauguration of the programs were used to determine the effect of the experimental treatments. Results showed that satisfaction with the job, with supervisors, and with the company in general increased for employees involved in the Autonomy program, but not for those in the Hierarchical program, whose satisfaction indexes showed a general decline. Productivity, as measured by comparing clerical costs with company standards, increased for both types of treatment, with the Hierarchy treatment showing the greater gain. This increase was achieved in the Hierarchical treatment by management's reducing the number of employees assigned to various tasks. In the Autonomy treatment, the number of employees was reduced by normal attrition, and the employees themselves voluntarily redistributed the work load and thus obviated the need of replacing employees who



**"We're all one happy family here, Mr. Brown, and we're looking for someone with the ability to make it work."**

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had left. In any event, the results did not support the researchers' hypothesis that the Autonomy treatment would result in greater productivity, although it is possible that a different measure of productivity would have showed different results. The results, however, strongly supported the hypothesis that employee satisfaction would be greater in the Autonomy condition.

## ***Organizational Change***

### ***The persistence of traditional patterns***

The problem of getting organizations to function was in former times perceived as that of placing people who were legitimate leaders (by reason of noble birth, for example) in charge of a task and giving them sufficient power in

the form of money, facilities, and personnel to accomplish it. As technology developed, it became apparent that leaders needed expertise, as well as prestige. During the middle-class revolution that began with the demise of feudalism, the world learned that organizational leaders did not need any special claim on legitimacy, and that the necessary expertise could be learned. We now know that technical expertise is not enough, either, and that the effective leader of today must also understand human motivation and group processes if the organizational undertaking is to succeed. Workers in the past had little choice about serving industrial organizations—the choice was literally that of working or starving. Workers today, however, have more options. The hazards of not working are not as severe as they once were, and a worker who has any degree of skill is likely to have a choice of work opportunities. Once he is employed, he is in a position to control, through his union or through other means, the degree to which he commits himself to the job. He may go into business for himself, or join the Army, or go to school to prepare for a different type of work. The greater range of options that workers have today quite understandably makes organizational management a more highly complex task than it was in former times.

Organizational efficiency is also hampered by the fact that we have inherited a number of beliefs and behavior patterns from bygone and simpler days. These modes of thought and action lead managers to do things that work at cross purposes to the main goals and objectives of the organizations they head. The delegation of power, influence, and control *down* a pyramidal power structure (but never up) is one of them; the idea that subordinates will perform more efficiently and make fewer mistakes if their duties are made highly specific is another. The belief that the main motivators

of employee productivity are economic and extrinsic is still another. Many managers today are psychologically sophisticated and are searching for ways to bring about changes that will make their organizations more effective, and the use of novel techniques on a trial-and-evaluation basis is increasing. In this section we discuss some of the newer techniques that are currently being used to bring about changes in organizations in the hope of making them more effective.

### *Theory X and Theory Y*

These newer techniques have been made possible by a reorientation that has been taking place in managerial circles for the last half century. The traditional, commonsense approach to organizational problems is typified by what Douglas McGregor (1960) called "Theory X." Theory X was based on the assumption that work is inherently distasteful to man, and that he must be bribed, cajoled, rewarded, or punished into doing it. The ideal organization, according to this assumption, is impersonal and functions without regard to the needs of individuals involved in its structure. Concepts of *chain of command* and *specialization of function* are consistent with this approach.

McGregor's Theory Y holds that work is natural for man. In carrying out work-related functions, people can be expected to take on responsibilities voluntarily and thus find their places in an organization, whose structure they may then change as the need presents itself. Theory Y maintains, furthermore, that creative capacity is widely distributed in the general population. An organization should, therefore, enable its members to be creative and to contribute to its development and function.

In sum, Theory X is "hard-nosed," pessimistic, and structure-bound, whereas Theory Y is humanistic, optimistic, and flexible, and is also

consistent with Maslow's "eupsychian management," that we mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The study conducted at the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric Company, that we discussed in Chapter 16, provided insights that led to the reformulation of management-employee relations consistent with Theory Y. The Hawthorne study showed that workers' motivational patterns were quite different from those traditionally hypothesized by management, that the social relations among the workers themselves were an important factor in their behavior, and that communication between workers and management had an important bearing on morale and production.

A number of programs implementing these principles were put into operation during the years that followed the publication of results from the study during the middle 1930's. These programs received special impetus during World War II, when a number of firms instituted human relations training for supervisors to keep morale at high levels, reduce absenteeism and turnover, and improve efficiency and production. Most of these programs were never evaluated in any kind of controlled study, and it is thus difficult to determine whether they had any real effect. The International Harvester study discussed in Chapter 16 raised some questions as to whether the typical "human relations program" is only a gesture on the part of top management or whether it is a sincere effort to modify the organizational structure. The fact that top administrators and policy makers are exempt from so many of these programs also poses a question as to whether they are sincere. As we pointed out in Chapter 16, foremen who spend time undergoing special training in human relations, and who then return to work situations in which their supervisors are functioning in ways contrary to what has been taught in the courses

they have just completed, are understandably cynical about using the considerate patterns of behavior they have learned.

Not all the programs have failed, however. One evaluation study compared companies that had done a great deal to improve communication between management and employees with those firms that had made much less effort. Differences between the two groups of companies are suggested by the fact that 72% of the companies in the first group were making use of group discussion meetings and planned to make even greater use in the future, whereas only 49% of the second group were using this method and only 37% planned to expand the use of this method. The practical value of the more enlightened policy was shown by the fact that companies in the first group were much less likely to have had a major or a minor strike in the two years preceding the survey and were also more optimistic about their ability to get along with unions (Opinion Research Corp., 1952).

The United Steelworkers of America and steel companies instituted a Human Relations Committee as a way of improving communication and reducing tension in contract negotiations. The Committee was composed of representatives of both labor and management and was given the task of resolving problems before official bargaining and contract negotiation began. Meetings were designed to permit free exchange of information and opinion, facilitated with rules like this one: any member of the committee could change his mind on any subject at any time, and no statement made by a member could be brought up later to embarrass him when formal bargaining actually began. As a result of improved communication and understanding, the Committee was able to eliminate much of the tension and hostility surrounding issues that had been repeated sources of dissension in previous years (Jones, 1963).

### *Group-decision method*

Many of the methods of improving communication and morale make use of some version of group decision. A number of studies have shown that people are more likely to follow through on decisions that they have made as part of a group discussion than they are to follow the suggestions and exhortations of authority figures. Kurt Lewin (1965), for example, reported on studies concerned with such problems as getting housewives to use cheaper cuts of meat during the shortages of World War II, to give their children more milk, and to supplement children's diet with orange juice and Vitamin D additives. Housewives who listened to lectures by experts, or who were given individual personal instruction by an expert, were less likely to follow the prescribed behavior than were housewives who had participated in 25-minute group discussions dealing with the problem. Similar results were reported by Betty Wells Bond (1956) in getting women to follow certain practices with respect to early detection of cancer, and by Jacob Levine and John Butler (1952) in getting supervisors to change their standards of rating employees.

The influence of group decision, as contrasted with that of being told, evidently derives from a number of factors generated through group interaction. One factor is the persistence of the effect of group norms even after an individual has left the physical context of the group. This phenomenon was reported by Muzafer Sherif (1936) in his study of the autokinetic effect we discussed earlier and has also appeared in a number of other studies we reported. Another factor is that of active, as opposed to passive, participation in decision making. In the study of the effects of antismoking propaganda, it was shown that the person who played the role of the propagandist was

much more likely to be affected by the propaganda than was his audience (Elms, 1966). It is quite possible that participation in a decision-making group has a somewhat similar effect on participants.

Still another possible factor is a psychological-reactance type of response that occurs when individuals feel that their behavior is being restricted (Brehm, 1966). An individual who receives an order from a person of authority is aware that his options are fewer than they were before the order was given. It may be that the subordinate welcomes this type of limitation, particularly when he is confused and does not know which one of a number of options to choose. When he is not confused and wishes to explore and develop his options, however, he is likely to resent the arbitrary limitation on his freedom.

A number of studies have explored the reasons why people are more likely to change their minds (and their behavior) after group discussion. Any proposed change in behavior carries a psychological risk or threat, because the possibility of change raises anxieties and tensions. This threat potential is often sufficient to discourage the person who is trying to decide whether he will make the change. Discussion may enable people to reduce this anxiety somewhat by spreading or diffusing the risk or responsibility for the change (Wallach, Kogan, & Bem, 1964). Salomon Rettig's (1966) research suggests that discussion helps make the change more legitimate. A person who changes runs the risk of deviating from group norms, whereas if the group produces a new norm that incorporates the change, he avoids that risk and may actually reinforce his acceptance by the group by following the new norm.

Cognitive dissonance may also be a factor. A person who finds himself going along with the trend in a group discussion would be likely



to experience dissonance if he did not change his behavior to conform to the new direction, even though the new pattern of behavior is inconsistent with what he has done in the past. On the other hand, there is little dissonance if he merely sits and listens to an authority figure tell him how he should behave. Any dissonance that might be created by that experience can be easily resolved by explanations of why he has not followed the recommended technique in the past and will be unable to do it in the future. Such explanations may be voiced openly, or they may take the form of "excuses to oneself."

In spite of its considerable power, the group-decision method has not been used to any great extent by organizations interested in changing the attitudes and behavior of lower-echelon personnel, perhaps because of certain natural limitations in the method. If it is used in its "pure" Lewinian form, the official convening the group discussion commits himself to abide by the members' decisions. Few organizations wish to take the risk of standing by any decision that groups of low-status members are likely to make. A college instructor, for example, turned over to the students the task of assigning final grades in a seminar and then was shocked when they decided that every class member had earned an "A." Not only was this not her evaluation of the work of the group, but it seemed to her that they had abdicated their responsibility to make valid judgments. She, therefore, rejected their decision and assigned the grades she thought they had earned. The class was outraged and appealed to the administration. The administration upheld the instructor, but the students still felt that the instructor had acted in bad faith. As word of the incident spread among the other students majoring in the field, the feeling grew that faculty members could not be trusted, and this, in turn, interfered with the relations between students and faculty.

This example is drawn from academic life, but similar outcomes have resulted when persons in authority have tried to use the group-decision method with their subordinates without genuine awareness of what they were getting involved in.

A second weakness of the group-decision method is the requirement that the group be small enough to enable members to become personally involved. This presents no problem for a work group of four to twelve persons, but as numbers exceed twelve or so, the possibility of a group decision involving all members is thereby diminished. Larger numbers can be involved through representation, of course, but this will work only when there is good communication between elected leaders and the rank and file. A number of nationwide strikes have been "settled" at the top level, only to have the settlements rejected by local unions who felt that their leadership had "sold them out." In such instances the social distance had become so great that the rank and file no longer felt identified with their leadership.

In spite of these shortcomings, group-decision technique is a powerful agent for organizational change, and one whose real potentialities are barely exploited as yet.

### *T-groups, sensitivity training, and therapy*

The years since World War II have seen a rapid increase in the number of organizations in the business, governmental, and educational world that have made use of what are called T-groups ("T" stands for training). The T-group is a kind of extension of the group-decision approach and makes use of another of Lewin's concepts: group dynamics. T-groups had their real start in 1947, when the National Training Laboratories started holding summer training sessions at Bethel, Maine, for people interested in improving their effectiveness in groups. T-

groups consist of from ten to sixteen people, plus one or two trainers, who meet together for an hour and a half to two hours, every day for two or three weeks. They have no agenda, structure, tasks, or procedural rules, but, instead, improvise as they go along. The purposes of T-groups as they have now evolved are those of helping members become aware of the effect others' behavior has on them and that their behavior has on others, learning to understand and to respond to the behavior and attempts at communication of others, and, above all increasing the empathy of the participants. Inasmuch as empathy consists of the ability to be aware of the feelings and attitudes of other people, such learning depends a great deal on the sensitivity one has developed toward others.

As T-group members meet and experience a group situation that totally lacks structure and direction, they struggle and flounder in a series of attempts to create structure and meaning. As this process continues, the trainers comment from time to time on the way in which members interact with one another, on the extent to which they are communicating freely or not, on attempts to dominate or escape from the group, and the like.

Persons who have participated in sensitivity training maintain this experience has enabled them to learn more effective ways of relating to others. They point out that it has taught them to understand better what others are trying to say, how and when feelings are hurt, why others annoy them, and so forth. Presumably, this experience and this understanding help them to be more effective as participants in an organization composed of other human beings. The difficulty—and Katz and Kahn (1966) point this out—is that T-group members go back into organizational environments that have not changed and that tend to reshape them in the old molds. T-groups, therefore, seem more likely to help individuals than organizations.

This problem has been approached by the method of having all the members of work teams, often including people from levels of power and authority, participate in sensitivity training. Although there are advantages in this approach, there are also problems. One is that on-the-job relationships may be transferred to the group and, instead of being explored in an accepting and understanding way, actually operate to inhibit free discussion and evaluation. Another risk is that of revealing highly personal information that is so charged with tension that work relationships are worsened instead of improved. Under proper direction, however, many of these pitfalls can be avoided.

After reviewing the fairly voluminous research on T-group methods, John P. Campbell and Marvin D. Dunnette (1968) concluded that the assumption made by many that T-group methods have positive value for organizations rests on shaky ground: it can be neither confirmed nor disconfirmed. Researchers find it a technique that is not easily evaluated. As an enterprise, it is strongly humanistic and even existential in its philosophy, and most of the evidence appears to be anecdotal. Some T-group leaders are inclined to reject the need for external criteria of effectiveness, stating that it is how the individual *feels* at the end of the experience that matters, rather than his increased productivity as an employee. Campbell and Dunnette answer this argument by noting that it is "inappropriate to claim that a program has utility for accomplishing organizational goals and then to justify such a statement on existential grounds" [p. 102].

Still another problem with T-group and other types of human resources development is that top management is often exempted from psychological intervention. As a result, organizational policies and psychological climate (which are likely to be basic to many of the interpersonal problems between organization members) do not change. In other words, what-

ever potential value sensitivity training may have is seriously impaired if top management continues to behave in ways that are antithetical to the philosophy underlying T-group work.

Sensitivity training has also been attempted in other countries. It has, for example, been introduced experimentally in Eastern Nigeria, under the auspices of the Ford Foundation, and in Japan as well. One study evaluating the effect of T-groups on Japanese businessmen shows that in spite of traditional Japanese restraints, sensitivity training nevertheless had positive effect. One of the objectives of such training is the attainment of "openness"—an uninhibited, natural willingness to reveal one's feelings. Pretraining measures showed that Japanese, as might be expected, are considerably less "open" than Americans are with their wives and with others when it comes to discussing personal problems, job success, positive feelings, and negative feelings. After sensitivity training, however, Japanese subjects had made more progress toward openness than a comparable group of Americans had (Massarik, 1965).

Recent years have also seen a rapid growth in the number of "encounter groups" of various types, which have a more frankly therapeutic aim than sensitivity training. Such groups function in ways similar to T-groups, except that they are more ambitious. Merely becoming sensitive to others and their needs is not enough; they also attempt to promote a greater degree of self-understanding, self-integration, and "authenticity," to use one word that members of such groups frequently employ to describe their objectives.

Such therapy groups are similar in some ways to T-groups, but they are concerned with more fundamental aspects of individual adjustment, rather than with the individual's interaction with others. They have been used to help reorient groups of co-workers within organizational frameworks, as for example, an engineering and metals concern in England, whose ther-

apy groups were supervised by consultants from the Tavistock Institute in London (Jacques, 1951). Unless therapy can be integrated with the problems and structure of entire organizations, however, it seems to be of limited value in bringing about organizational change. A number of management consultant firms have attempted to facilitate the process of change by providing counseling services for top-management personnel and then working down the power structure, gradually involving people at each succeeding level in therapeutic "encounter" groups. Although this approach has promise, there is a lack of evidence as to whether the method has any long-range effects.

As of the present writing, research from a number of different studies suggests that organizations can be strengthened and made more effective if ways can be found to involve people in decisions that affect them and to open up two-way channels of communication. The devices that have been tried so far seem largely piecemeal. It is possible that if starts are made at the top of the organizational power structure to introduce new approaches to human relations, the organizational climate can be changed in such a way as to make therapeutic and sensitivity training endeavors worthwhile. Organizations, even large ones, possess the power to serve society and provide satisfactions for those who work within their structure, but much must be done to humanize them if they are to reach the fullest extent of that potential.

### *Summary*

Organizations are social devices for accomplishing some stated purpose efficiently through group means and are the result of interaction among people, the need to accomplish something, and leadership. Organizations may also be conceived of as open systems having inputs, transformation processes, and outputs. Still

another concept is that of organizations as systems of interdependent social roles or clusters of activities. One type of organization is the bureaucracy, a much-criticized type of institution, but one that is essential in a complex society. The major types of organizations are productive or economic, maintenance, adaptive, and managerial or political. Factories, farms, and mines are examples of productive-economic organizations; schools, churches, and hospitals, of maintenance organizations; research institutes and universities, of adaptive organizations; and political parties, labor unions, professional societies, and the state itself, of managerial-political organizations. Some organizations perform functions in several of these categories.

If organizations are to be effective, they must satisfy the psychological needs of their members and employees, as well as accomplish the purposes for which they were organized. Managers, proprietors, technical workers, and professional workers are generally better able to obtain satisfactions from their employment than are clerical, sales, and unskilled workers. The former type of organization member or employee is more likely to mention rewards that are variously described as "intrinsic" or "ego" satisfactions (personal involvement, self-expression, responsibility, achievement) in connection with the job, whereas the latter type of employee is more likely to mention extrinsic satisfactions (pay, working conditions, social relations on the job, and security). These two types of rewards are termed "motivation" and "hygiene" by Herzberg. The high value given motivation rewards by many workers, particularly at high status levels, is contrary to common sense, which holds that the chief objective in working is that of obtaining economic reward—money. Even high status employees have dissatisfactions, however. One survey of managers in a number of different countries shows that the need most likely to go unsatisfied is the

need for self-actualization (opportunity for personal growth, self-fulfillment, and accomplishment). The most satisfied managers are in Scandinavia and Germany, and the least satisfied managers are in Italy and India.

Theorists point out that the most significant rewards in working are those to be found in the work itself, rather than in the social relationships in the work situation. This formulation favors the task-oriented individual, as contrasted with the interaction-oriented and the self-oriented individual. Members of discussion groups are more comfortable with interaction-oriented individuals, but find the task-oriented individual to be more helpful. The self-oriented individual is the least effective group member of the three types.

The higher the status of a member of an organization, the freer he feels to initiate communication; however, such freedom does not imply a corresponding degree of receptivity. Low-status people who are denied the right to communicate with higher-status people may react by sabotaging the organization's operations in subtle or obvious ways; becoming engaged in interesting activities unrelated to their tasks; or displacing hostility on scapegoats. Overachievers in industrial organizations often become scapegoats.

The larger the organization, the more complex are its communication problems, and the lower its productive efficiency and worker satisfaction. Large size is also associated with high rates of absenteeism, employee turnover, labor disputes, and accidents. One study shows that a sales manager's success in influencing his salesmen is positively correlated with their ability to influence him. A major problem in organizations is that of integrating subgroups into the larger organizational group. Individuals occupying positions at the middle-management level play crucial roles in this linkage and are successful to the extent that they can represent the interests of subgroups to top management

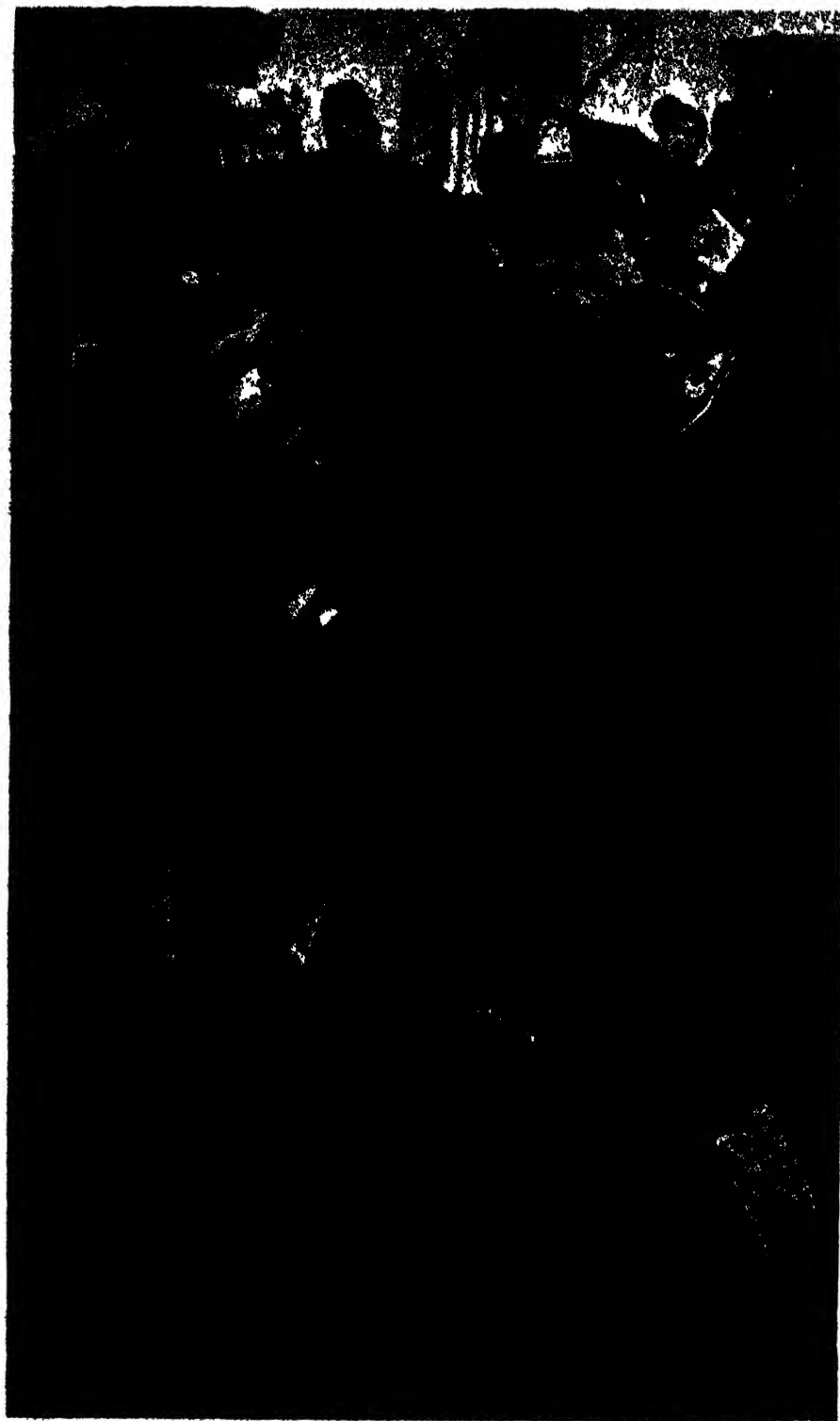
and the interests of management to subgroup members. A comparative study of hierarchical (centralized) and autonomous (decentralized) structures in a large organization showed no difference in economy of operation over an eighteen-month trial period, but employee satisfaction declined in the hierarchical condition and increased in the autonomous condition.

Workers today have more options and hence more freedom than they used to. This has increased the complexity of the task faced by organizations and calls for changes in attitudes and new techniques of management. The development of these newer techniques has been facilitated by the emergence of what McGregor called Theory Y. Theory X holds that work is inherently distasteful to man; hence, he has to be manipulated through rewards, punishment, and structure to perform it. This is the traditional viewpoint that is consistent with common sense. Theory Y holds that work is a natural activity for man and that through it he is able to become creative and responsible. Theory Y was anticipated in the Hawthorne experiment that led to the widespread introduction of new techniques of management. The Western Electric study led to the widespread introduction of programs of human relations training, but the International Harvester study raised questions as to whether limiting such programs to middle management has any real effect on employee relations or produc-

tion. Efforts made to improve communication throughout the organization have produced positive results, according to one survey. Getting people involved in a group-decision process may be a useful way of bringing about organizational change, because such decisions are more likely to be carried out by participants than decisions made by top management and communicated to subordinates. One problem with group decisions is that management may not wish to abide by the group's decision. Another is that decision-making groups must be small enough to permit the involvement of members.

A type of group that has attracted widespread attention is the T group, which sets itself the task of helping members find more effective ways of working and interacting with others, with particular emphasis on the affective aspects of interpersonal relationships. Although the evidence favoring these methods is quite persuasive, most of it is anecdotal and difficult to evaluate systematically. One problem is that members go back into organizational environments that tend to reshape them in the old molds. If top management can be involved in such training, however, there is a chance that the psychological climate of the entire organization may be changed for the better. Therapy groups are similar in methodology to T groups, but they are more ambitious and attempt to bring about fundamental changes in the emotional life of participants.





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## Chapter 18

# Aggression and its Management

Aggression, like most of the concepts we have discussed in this book, leads itself to a variety of definitions. Psychiatrists Marshall F. Gilula and David N. Daniels (1969) describe it broadly as "the entire spectrum of assertive, intrusive, and attacking behaviors," and point out that this definition includes "overt and covert attacks, such defamatory acts as sarcasm, self-directed attacks, and dominance behavior," as well as "such assertive behaviors as forceful and determined attempts to master a task or accomplish an act" [p. 396]. The form of aggression that concerns us the most is, of course, violence, which is a form of destructive aggression that involves inflicting of "physical damage on persons or property (since property is so often symbolically associated with the self)" [p. 396].



In this chapter we shall be primarily concerned with a somewhat narrower concept of aggression—that is, aggression as it is intentionally expressed in actions against others, especially in its more violent and antisocial forms. It is well to keep in mind, however, that aggressiveness may be expressed in harmless or even in prosocial ways and that it is often difficult to identify it or to distinguish it from its other forms.

### *Movement toward, away from, or against others*

There are, as Karen Horney (1945) once pointed out, three basic ways in which we can relate to others: we can move toward them, away from them, or against them. Horney was writing about modes of dealing with interpersonal disturbances, but the scheme works equally well for any kind of human relationship. We have tended to stress the "toward" type of movement in this book so far—the kind of behavior which is based on social attraction and the need for affiliation (n Aff) and which expresses itself in such phenomena as interaction orientation, cohesiveness, cooperation, and consideration, because this is the primary direction in social behavior.

Social systems are held together by people's desires to move toward one another, and movements away from or against others are perceived as potential threats to the social order. We have noted how competition and other forms of self-oriented behavior are perceived as deviant by groups with any degree of cohesiveness. Movement against others is likely to call for more severe measures, because it poses an even greater threat to the group. Another reason why groups are threatened by movements away from or against others is the possibility that such behavior may be contagious and may start a trend that will eventually destroy the group. A high degree of self-centeredness

on the part of group members may even lead to panic in stress situations, as has been shown in a number of catastrophes.

There are times, of course, when movement against others may contribute to the cohesiveness of a group. Competition that pits one group against another may, as we have noted, increase cohesiveness within the context of the groups themselves, and the heightened morale that appears during the early stages of a war is sometimes perceived as so desirable that many a shaky government has become involved in armed conflict as a way of drumming up popular support.

Movements toward, away from, and against others may also be perceived as reactions to danger, imminent injury or destruction, meaninglessness, discontinuities between expectation and reality—situations that psychologists refer to collectively as "threat." Indeed, most negative emotions may be characterized in terms of the kind of behavior that individuals believe is appropriate in the face of the threat. A person who perceives his course of action as that of moving *away* from the source of the threat may be said to be afraid, anxious, or panicky, whereas a person who perceives his course of action as that of moving *against* the source of the threat may be said to be angry, enraged, or irritated. Movement *toward* the source of the threat would, in the sense that Horney uses the word, be a denial that the threat is actually a threat.

### *Hostility and aggression*

Movement against others is, as we have pointed out previously, generally discouraged by members of social systems, unless it is directed against sources of threat to the group itself. Such behavior is commonly described as "hostile" or "aggressive." The term "hostile" is generally used to characterize the attitudinal background of the behavior, whereas the term

"aggressive" usually refers to the act of moving against another person or object. Arnold H. Buss (1961), in his review of theory and research dealing with aggression, defines "aggression" as "*a response that delivers noxious stimuli to another organism*" (p. 1) and "hostility" as "*an attitudinal response that endures: an implicit verbal response involving negative feelings (ill will) and negative evaluations of people and events*" (p. 12).

Aggression, according to the theory developed by John Dollard and others (1939), is the result of frustration. More specifically, "an interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal-response at its proper time in the behavior sequence" (frustration) leads to a "sequence of behavior, the goal-response to which is the injury of the person toward whom it is directed," (aggression). The Dollard theory has stimulated much research in hostility and aggression (Berkowitz, 1958). Although it is widely accepted by psychologists as a theoretical framework, it has also been criticized as being too limited. For one thing, as Buss points out, it conceives of aggression as occurring only in the presence of anger and thus neglects a whole class of aggressive responses. For another, aggressive actions might well be directed toward and reinforced by the acquisition of some reward (such as money) and not toward injuring the victim.

In a later review, Leonard Berkowitz (1965) states that the frustration-aggression hypothesis should be altered in at least three ways. First, the emotion that results from frustration (anger), does not necessarily result in aggression, but creates only a *readiness* for aggressive acts. Second, even with this readiness to act aggressively, aggression will not occur unless there are suitable cues available, as, for instance, stimuli that are associated with the present or previous instigators of anger. Third, instead of postulating that all aggression "presupposes that the existence of frustration,"

we now know instead that appropriate cues may lead to aggressive behavior when previously learned aggressive habits are aroused. These habits can be learned without the learner necessarily being frustrated. The work of Bandura and Walters (1963), for example, shows that subjects can acquire aggressive habits merely by observing the behavior of an aggressive model.

Harry Kaufmann (1970) criticizes the formulations of Dollard and Miller and Buss, as well as the type of broad definition used by Gilula and Daniels, with which we began this chapter, by saying that they generally include too much. The definition of aggression he prefers, which is the one we shall follow, is one that includes behavior that (a) is directed against another individual (or individuals), and (b) expresses the intention or desire to inflict injury. Although this meaning excludes fantasy aggression and actions against nonhuman objects, the behavior it covers is the type that would be recognized by anyone as being "aggressive."

### *Biological bases of aggression*

It is a matter of some controversy among behavioral scientists as to whether we are biologically organized to behave in hostile or in accepting ways toward others. Ashley Montagu (1955), an anthropologist, claims that the basic drives in man, as well as in the lower animals, are positive and accepting, leading to patterns of affiliation and cooperation. Konrad Lorenz (1966) tends to follow the direction indicated by Sigmund Freud's (1955) "death wish," and proposes not only that man and the other mammals have aggressive instincts, but that aggression has a certain utilitarian value. Some clinical psychologists are inclined to favor the Freudian position that both destructive and creative instincts motivate man's behavior, whereas others prefer an orthogenic point of view, namely, that basic drives are positive and

that organisms will develop in healthy, positive ways, unless prevented from doing so by severe environmental stress (Rogers, 1951; Combs & Snygg, 1959).

It may be well to examine what constitutes environmental stress. One obvious possibility is the experience of being attacked by an aggressor. The usual reaction to this is that of retaliation, a defensive response that can be explained as an adaptive one, motivated by the individual's need to keep his person and property—his perceived self—intact. On the surface, such a response might be considered to be normal and hence instinctive. Such a formulation does not, however, explain why victims often retaliate *after* the event, when the aggressor is no longer threatening and may even be powerless. Still another problem lies in the victim's interpretation of the situation. Some individuals are ever ready to determine that they are or have been the object of aggression and ever eager to retaliate. There are other victims who are slow to react to even the most blatant attacks. The research by Kagan and Madsen (1972), that we described in Chapter 11, showed that Mexican children in a rural area were characteristically passive and made no attempt to defend their property when others made aggressive gestures, whereas American children were not only ready to defend what was theirs, but also took apparent pleasure in depriving another child of his possessions, even when there was no personal gain on their part.

Aggressive reactions to invasions of personal territory also seem to be instinctive at first glance. We noted in our discussion of proxemics in Chapter 12 that there are cultural differences with respect to what is perceived as the distance acceptable between two individuals in face-to-face contact. Irrespective of whatever interpersonal distance a culture sets as being normal, there is universal agreement that attempts to exceed those limits and to come closer to a person are likely to be perceived

by him as an expression of intimacy or aggressiveness. Inasmuch as an individual's intimate relations are generally limited to a select few, invasions of private space on the part of others are likely to be considered as attempts to aggress. Indeed, experiments and field studies, as well as everyday experience, show that intrusions into what an individual has staked out or marked as his personal territory are likely to evoke defensive responses on his part (Sommer & Becker, 1969). Observation of larger groups, like gangs, tribes, and nations, also confirms the tendency to react with aggression to invasion of what a group regards as its territory.

If invasion of territory is likely to trigger aggressive instincts, one would expect that overcrowding would lead to marked increases in aggression. A study by Yukimaru Susiyama (1967) does indicate that high density among bands of wild monkeys leads to a general breakdown in their social order, coupled with extreme aggressive behavior; and research by John B. Calhoun (1962) shows that aggressiveness is increased by overcrowding among rats. Although aggressiveness can occur among overcrowded animals, this does not mean that it is the usual response. Calhoun's (1966) rats were more likely to respond with apathy and withdrawal to overcrowding. Indeed, what research studies on overcrowding generally show with respect to both man and animals is that it leads to increases in a variety of pathological forms of behavior, of which extreme aggressiveness is only one (Galle, Gove, & McPherson, 1972). Although the idea that aggression is an instinctual response to perceived invasions of territorial boundaries is an attractive one on common-sense grounds, it has to be qualified to such a degree as to raise questions about whether it really is universal and hence instinctual. There are, furthermore, a number of examples of aggression that cannot be explained in terms of an eagerness to defend either one's person or one's territory.

The position we have taken in this book is that the major trends in human social behavior are learned and are not instinctive. This position does not rule out the possibility that man is biologically predisposed to behave in certain ways and that differences in aggressive tendencies may be genetically determined. As we noted in Chapter 9, for example, aggressiveness and venturesomeness appear to be more characteristic of male primates, whereas socializing responses appear to be more characteristic of female primates. Man's capacity for learning, however, leads him to develop a wide variety of responses to threatening situations. Although we can theorize that anger and aggression are instinctive responses to frustration, we can also observe that individuals and cultures differ markedly in terms of (a) what they perceive as frustration; (b) how they react to a perceived frustration; (c) how they deal with anger, if that is their response to the frustration they perceive; and (d) the form of their aggression, if that is the way they elect to express their anger.

### *Origins and Forms of Aggression*

Aggression, irrespective of whether it is biologically determined or socially induced, is a potential threat to the structure and goals of society and its members. Hence, it becomes important to note what steps might be taken to bring about the kind of learning that weakens or rechannels aggressive behavior and its underlying motives.

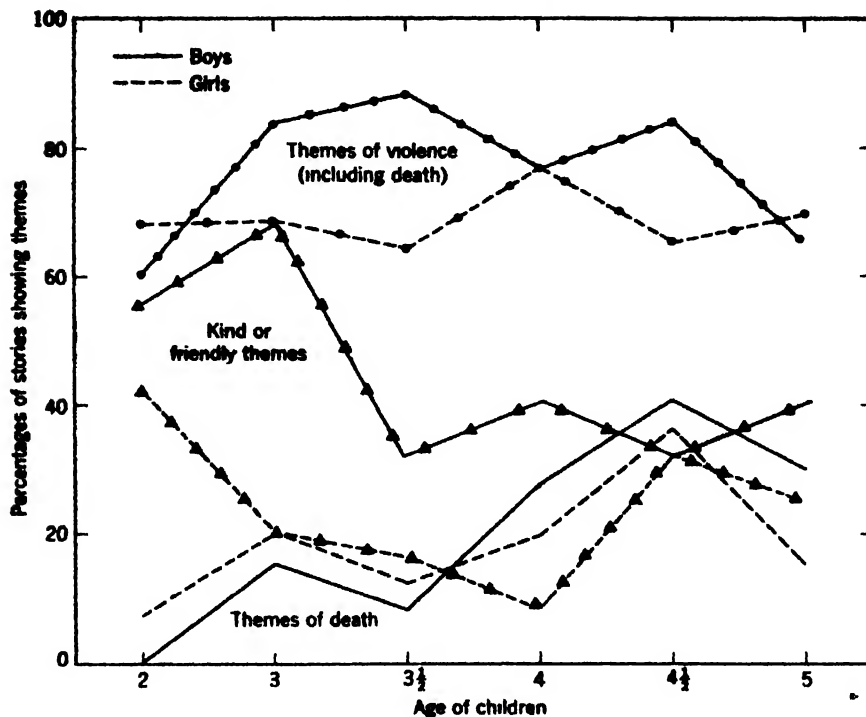
#### *The perception of threat in infancy and childhood*

Neonates respond with crying to unpleasant changes in their immediate physical environment. At this point, it is difficult to determine whether their typical reactions are fear or

anger. By the time they are about six months old, however, fear and anger responses can be differentiated (Bridges, 1932). At about 8 or 9 months, they begin to be more aware of remote sources of threat, for it is at this time that they begin to show fear of strangers. H. R. Schaffer (1966) found that female infants showed the usual pattern of being more responsive to social situations than males, for they reached this developmental milestone at the mean age of 35 weeks, in contrast to the mean for males of 37 weeks.

As the infant develops, he tends to lose this fear of strangers (although this differs from one culture to another) and normally finds novel situations and encounters increasingly attractive, providing the threat potential is minimal, of course. Although there are a number of explanations for this trend of development, one probability is that novelty, as we noted in Chapter 2, is stimulating and arousing. Excitement, within reasonable limits, has positive value for most children in most urbanized cultures. If novelty carries with it a suggestion of threat, it may be even more interesting.

It is this positive value that becomes attached to arousal which probably underlies the interest that fantasy expressions of aggression, violence, and other forms of threat have for children. This interest appears almost as soon as children can talk. Louise Bates Ames (1966) conducted an exploratory study of stories told by preschool children at the Gesell Institute Guidance Nursery School in New Haven, Conn., and found that themes of violence predominated for all ages (two to five years) and for both sexes. Inasmuch as most of these children were from upper-middle-class families, it cannot be said that their lives had been marked by exposure to an unusual number of grim and shocking events. Some of Ames' data, reported in Figure 18-1, show that themes of violence predominate and follow a curvilinear trend, starting at 64% at age 2 and ending the pre-



**Figure 18-1.** Percentages of various themes in stories told by preschool children at various ages (Ames, 1966). (The percentages at any given age may add up to more than 100%, because a given story could show more than one theme—that is, it could contain a theme of violence and a friendly theme as well.)

school period with 78% at age 5. Boys are more likely to express violent themes in their stories from 3 years of age onward. The proportion of kind or friendly themes drops during the age span covered by the report, with boys reporting consistently fewer of these themes than girls, although the difference between the sexes diminishes toward the end of the period. Themes involving death tend to increase during the period, with girls reporting more of such themes at first, and boys surpassing them toward the end of the period. In general, boys' themes tended to be more violent and less friendly than those of girls. This was particularly true during the later stages of the developmental period.

### *The stimulus value of violence and aggression in adulthood*

Interest in violence and aggression continues into the adult years. There are many everyday examples of the ability of violent stimuli to attract our attention. A stormy sea that is breaking up a stranded ship is more interesting than a quiet sea. Observe how quickly people gather around the scene of an accident, or how they drop everything to go to a fire. We often complain that newspapers print only bad news and seldom print the good things that happen to people, but the prominent place given bad news merely confirms the fact that readers find bad news more interesting and hence more

attractive. And murder mysteries and other tales of violence outsell love stories and poetry many times over.

### *The effect of the culture on aggression and violence*

In urbanized societies, members of lower-class groups tend to display more direct physical aggression than the middle-class people. This difference is multicausal. Its causes can be found in the fact that middle-class individuals tend to deal with frustrations symbolically and to feel anxious and guilty about hostile behavior. Because aggression is deplored by middle-class people, they have worked out a number of social devices—discussion, arbitration, negotiation—to resolve interpersonal differences. The same devices are also available to lower-class people, but they are less likely to be aware of what it takes to use them. Furthermore, impulsivity is not regarded highly by most middle-class people; it has a higher value in the lower classes. Unfortunately, impulsivity works both ways: on the one hand, it leads to warmer expressions of positive feeling, but on the other hand, it also leads to loss of temper and often to violence.

The most obvious difference between lower- and middle-class environments is, of course, economic. The fact that resources of all kinds are in short supply in poor neighborhoods increases the probability of interpersonal conflict among lower-class individuals. During times of business recession, however, the rate for violent crime tends to drop, instead of rise, as common sense would suggest. Leonard Berkowitz (1972) accounts for this puzzling trend in terms of the comparisons that unemployed members of lower-class communities make between themselves and their employed neighbors. During periods of business expansion, the unemployed lower-class individual cannot help but note that his employed neighbor is better off than he is. Such invidious

comparisons increase psychological and social tensions, and thus make interpersonal aggression and violence all the more probable. During times of business recession, the relative difference between the employable and the unemployable narrows, there is less jealousy, and fewer violent crimes are committed.

Differences in child-rearing methods may also lead to different attitudes toward aggression. We have noted that lower-class members learn to be more tolerant of aggression than middle-class members, but even within the middle class there is a considerable degree of variation. One study using male college students, all presumably middle class, took place under conditions in which the subjects were led to expect punishment (electric shock) for failures, reward (cash payment) for successes, or information (being told whether a response was "right" or "wrong") for successes or failures. The task they would be tested on, they were told, would involve their memorizing vocabulary words in an artificial language, Esperanto. Before the experiment began, however, they were asked to fill out a questionnaire rating the instructor who was to give them the test and who would presumably shock them, reward them, or inform them of their failures or successes, depending on the experimental condition that would prevail for the subjects in question. They also filled out questionnaires asking for ratings of themselves and of "typical" university students. At this point, the experiment terminated.

When the questionnaire replies of the subjects were scored, it appeared that students who described their parents' child-rearing methods as democratic tended to identify with their instructor best under the reward-and-information conditions, whereas those whose parents were more restrictive and authoritarian identified best under the punishment condition. The experimenters concluded that their results supported the idea that individuals reared in an authoritarian atmos-

phers would, as adults, be more inclined to identify with aggressors, whereas those who had been reared in democratic environments would be more inclined to identify with authority figures who were supportive and benign (Baxter, Lerner, & Miller, 1965).

### *Institutionalized and personalized forms of aggression*

It would be well, at this point, to note that there are at least two major varieties of interpersonal and intergroup aggression. One type is institutionalized aggression, aggression that has the sanction of the group or society, usually, but not always, because the target is perceived as some kind of a threat. Under this heading would be included the punishment of law-breakers. Punishment may cover everything from death and torture to public reprimand, and its severity will depend on the norms and values of the society on whose behalf the penalty is exacted. Although the stated motive for such punishment is a desire to reform the deviant and to discourage the deviancy of others, there is little doubt but that retaliation is an important underlying motive. This element appears in such frequently heard statements as "He must pay his debt to society;" "He had it coming to him; he got what he deserved;" and "I hope they throw the book at him." The point here, however, is that a penalty exacted in the form of punishment for a law-breaker is a form of socially legitimized aggression, because it is directed against an individual with intent to injure him in some way—physically, psychologically, or socially. This is not to raise questions regarding the morality, desirability, or effectiveness of punishment, but merely to note that it is a form of aggression.

Some forms of institutionalized aggression are considered legitimate only in a limited way. Looting and burning may appear to be an appropriate form of aggression to bands of irregulars in the jungles and mountains of

underdeveloped countries. As far as they are concerned, such behavior is both institutionalized and legitimate. The majority of the population, however, probably denies the legitimacy of the institution the irregulars represent, as well as the actions they perform. The shooting of looters by policemen during a riot is seen as illegitimate and unwarranted aggression by the looters, who reject society and its institutions, but the society on whose behalf the police are acting may view their actions as legitimate, appropriate, and proper defense of its institutions.

Warfare is another example of institutionalized aggression. The people of a country that attacks or invades another, harasses its nationals, or destroys its property generally believe that it is acting legitimately in defense of its institutions. The other country is likely to believe otherwise. Fortunately, most international aggression does not reach the drastic level of warfare. Instead, countries resort to such watered-down and institutionalized forms of aggression as angry speeches by heads of state, economic sanctions, treaties with other nations, and protective tariffs.

The second type of aggression is personalized. It ranges from murder and mayhem to angry words. The more severe forms are forbidden by law, but some rather vigorous forms, like boxing and wrestling, are permitted and even encouraged in our culture.

The chief difference between institutionalized and personalized forms of aggression, as far as the more severe forms are concerned, lies in the attitudes and feelings of members of society. The individual who commits an aggressive act that has been legitimized by society may be praised and rewarded, may feel no guilt at all, and may even feel virtuous. His behavior is perceived as that of defending society and its institutions and is thus consistent with society's norms. The individual who engages in an equally violent form of aggression for personal reasons will, on the other hand, be

regarded as an enemy of society. His behavior has not been legitimized and is perceived as counternorm, deviant, and reprehensible. The difference is a perceptual one, but the perception takes place within the frame of reference and the mores of the society concerned.

## *Prejudice and Intergroup Hostility*

### *The nature of prejudice*

The norms a society develops determine not only how much hostility can be openly expressed, but also what forms it can take. The more complex the society, the more likely it is to insist that hostility be expressed symbolically, rather than directly. In our society, hostility may be "sublimated," to use the Freudian term, by being worked off through competitive sports and games, hard physical work, problem-solving endeavor, or competitive enterprise. Latent hostility is often expressed toward certain groups in the form of prejudiced actions. For example, a society may use the police to harass groups of teenagers whose choice of dress or leisure-time activities is at variance with the norms of the adult culture.

In Chapter 12 we cited research by Amir (1969) that outlined bases for intergroup prejudice. Briefly stated, they include competition between groups, mutual disapproval of values and behavior patterns, differences in group status, and interaction that results in frustration. Here is how prejudice operates to facilitate aggression:

1. Society, some segment of society, or its agents designates some readily identifiable group as an appropriate target and as a suitable object for hostility and/or aggression.
2. The target group should be different in some way that the prejudiced groups believes to be significant and inferior: poor, young, nonwhite, female, members of an unpopular

religious faith, homosexual, foreign, or whatever.

3. Members of the target group should collectively or individually appear vulnerable in some way.

4. Stereotyped beliefs which support the negative attitudes toward members of the target group are learned, usually during childhood.

5. Hostile attitudes and/or behavior assume a degree of legitimacy and constitute an institutionalized form of aggression, thus freeing the individual from the need to feel guilty.

6. Society generally provides some kind of channel in the form of more-or-less sanctioned behavior that facilitates the expression of hostility toward the target persons. Depending on the norms of the society and the situation involved, modes of expressing prejudice may range from social isolation of the target persons to lynching or otherwise exterminating them.

The points we have listed obviously apply to the behavior of dominant groups toward nonwhite minorities in Western societies. Many of them are poor and uneducated and hence lack the means to protect themselves from exploitation and harassment. Aggression is often expressed in symbolic ways, as through the use of pejorative language ("nigger," "greaser," "spick," etc.) or exclusion from employment and housing.

People who are chronically bitter or suspicious tend to express more prejudice toward nonwhites than do people whose generalized hostility lies closer to the norm (Bettelheim & Janowitz, 1950). It is not necessary for people to be seriously maladjusted to be prejudiced. The willingness of normal, everyday people to maintain racially segregated housing and to exclude nonwhites from equal participation in the rewards of society is evidence that visible difference, perceived vulnerability, and learned patterns of behavior are sufficient to evoke prejudiced responses.



*Perceived difference as the basis for prejudice*

Milton Rokeach (1960) makes the point that a perceived difference in belief systems is the most significant basis for prejudice. The interpretation has been criticized by Harry C. Triandis (1961) on the grounds that Negroes are excluded from certain neighborhoods because they are Negroes, not for their beliefs. Evidence that supports Rokeach's position, however, has been supplied by the study by Donn Byrne and Terry J. Wong (1962), we mentioned in Chapter 3. Byrne and Wong found that similarity in attitudes led to positive ratings of a fictitious stranger, irrespective of his race, and irrespective of the degree of measured prejudice of the rater. This problem has been further explored in a study of ninth grade white students, who were asked to evaluate four "typical teenagers." Each subject was given questionnaires that had presumably been filled out by four other teenagers, two white and two Negro. A "white" and a "Negro" questionnaire were answered with responses like those the subject himself had given two months earlier, when he had filled out a questionnaire of teenage attitudes, and the other two "white" and Negro" questionnaires were filled out with responses that differed considerably from those he had given. Results gave some support to Triandis' contention, in that the average acceptance score for the two fictitious whites was somewhat higher than the mean score for the two fictitious Negroes. A further analysis of the scores showed, however, that the teenagers were reacting primarily in terms of similarity of beliefs and only secondarily in terms of race. Fictitious Negroes, for whom similar attitudes were reported, were, for instance, accorded considerably more acceptance than fictitious whites with dissimilar attitudes (Stein, Hardyck, & Smith, 1965).

The results of this study also suggest that

a great deal of prejudiced behavior results from the fact that people have no prior knowledge of the attitudes and values of the target individuals and hence make their decisions on the basis of stereotyped beliefs about the minority group in question. A correlational analysis of the data in the foregoing study showed that the teenagers responded to a fictitious Negro who had been represented as unlike them in values in much the same way that they had responded earlier to an otherwise unspecified Negro teenager about whom they had no information. In other words, "Negro" to them meant "someone who has values unlike mine." Inasmuch as the target person in this instance is assumed to have values that do not resemble those of the dominant group and that may actually be in opposition, people in the dominant group tend to maintain a high degree of social distance by seeing to it that he is isolated from the rest of society. Exclusion from neighborhoods, schools, and job opportunities are among the methods most commonly used to maintain social distance. The maintenance of social distance has a circular or reciprocating effect on the stereotyped belief that serves as the basis for isolation, because it helps perpetuate and reinforce the prejudiced behavior. If we arrange matters so that we have little or no contact with people who are the targets of our prejudice, we will never find out whether they have similar values or not. Indeed, the authors of the study cited earlier stated that the results constitute a strong argument in favor of more interaction on an equal-status basis between members of dominant and minority groups.

*Aggression as a Dependent Variable*

During the last decade there have been a number of studies in which experimental conditions have been manipulated in such a way as

to produce varying degrees of aggression in subjects. Some of these studies were instituted in order to study variables other than aggression, but their results have told us a great deal about aggression and the conditions under which it is likely to occur.

### *Milgram's "shocking" research*

The classic experiment in this series was conducted by Stanley Milgram (1963), who was interested in investigating subjects' responses to a moral dilemma: the moral imperative that says that authority figures must be obeyed, and the moral proscription against willfully inflicting pain on another—aggression.

Subjects in Milgram's study were led to believe that they were involved in an attempt to measure the effect of punishment on learning. As each subject appeared at the laboratory, he met a second subject (actually an accomplice of the experimenter). The two then drew lots to see who would be the "learner" and the "teacher" in the experiment. The drawing was rigged so that the accomplice would always be the "learner." The "learner" was then strapped into a realistic-appearing electric-chair type of apparatus, and the naive subject was taken to an adjoining room, where he was shown how to operate a switchboard that purportedly administered shocks to the "learner." There was a series of thirty switches that could be used to deliver shocks ranging from 15 volts (labeled as "slight shock") to 300 volts ("intense shock"), 360 volts ("extreme intensity shock"), 420 volts ("danger: severe shock"), and even 450 volts ("XXX"). The subject was told to read lists of words with multiple-choice options over a microphone, and that the "learner" would respond by pressing the button for one of four lights to indicate his reply. The "teacher" was instructed to press a lever that would presumably shock the "learner" every time the latter made an error. Each shock was

to be of a higher intensity than the previous one. As the "learning" session progressed, a number of the teacher-subjects became anxious or even upset, particularly when the shock level reached 300 volts ("intense shock") and the "learner" pounded on the wall between the rooms. When this occurred, the subjects usually looked to the experimenter for guidance, only to be told that they had no choice but to go on with the experiment. From this point on, nothing further was heard from the learner, and he did not even respond to the "teacher's" questions. Subjects were then told that a failure to reply must be counted as a wrong answer and that they were to give the "learner" the next higher shock on the scale and go with the list of words, continuing to increase the shock with each failure to respond.

When a sampling of senior psychology majors was asked to predict what proportion of naive subjects would go through to the end of the experiment and administer what the subjects thought was a 450-volt shock, they guessed that not more than 2 or 3% would do so. Even Milgram's colleagues doubted that many subjects would administer shock above the 240-volt level. What actually happened, however, was that no subject refused until the 300-volt level was reached (when the "victim" pounds on the wall) and at that point only five out of the forty subjects withdrew from the situation. An additional nine subjects dropped out at the next succeeding shock levels, and twenty-six (65%) actually continued until the last switch (450 volts) had been pulled. At that point, or at whatever point the subject withdrew, the experiment was explained to the subject, and the "victim" appeared and assured the subject that the apparatus had not been connected and that he had not been shocked.

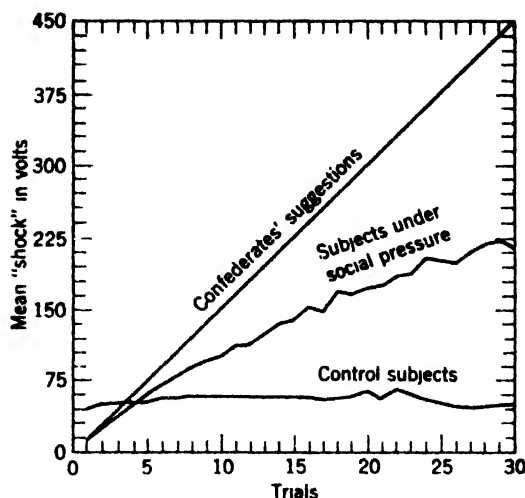
The subjects were without exception relieved to learn that the shocks had only been simulated. Some of the subjects were exceedingly upset by the experience. Milgram writes:

I observed a mature and initially poised businessman enter the laboratory smiling and confident. Within 20 minutes he was reduced to a twitching, stuttering wreck, who was rapidly approaching a point of nervous collapse. He constantly pulled on his earlobe, and twisted his hands. At one point he pushed his fist into his forehead and muttered: "Oh God, let's stop it." And yet he continued to respond to every word of the experimenter, and obeyed to the end.

Milgram (1964) conducted a variation of his initial experiment in which the "shocks" were administered to the "learner" by three "teachers": a naive subject and two confederates of the experimenter. In this experiment, the "teachers" received instructions that they were to recommend the shock level to be administered whenever the "learner" failed a test item. The two "teachers" who were confederates made their recommendations first, thus implicitly putting social pressure on the naive subject to go along with them. However, the "teachers" were also told that the shock that would be administered by the third (naive) teacher would be at the lowest level suggested. Hence, the naive "teacher" was free to suggest and administer a shock level of only 15 volts if he wished. The experimental situation was thus similar to the Asch (1956) and IPAR experiments we described in Chapter 4, except that the naive subject's expressed judgment served as the basis for his taking some kind of action: aggression.

The unanimous recommendations of the stooges followed a uniformly increasing trend, starting with 15 volts on the first error or "critical trial," and increasing with 15-volt increments for each of the succeeding trials until a maximum of 450 volts had been recommended for the thirtieth critical trial. Their recommendations are represented by the straight diagonal line in Figure 18-2.

Whereas the "learner" in Milgram's first



**Figure 18-2.** Mean "shock" levels administered to a "learner" by naive subjects under social pressure from suggestions of the experimenter's confederates, as contrasted with mean "shock" levels given by control subjects in situations in which they "shocked" the "learner" in the absence of others' suggestions (after Milgram, 1964).

experiment had protested only once by kicking the wall at the 300-volt level, the "learner" in this experiment began to complain at 75 volts. The complaints had all been prerecorded on magnetic tape, which was activated when the lever for the appropriate shock level was pulled. At 75 volts to 105 volts, the learner was heard to grunt slightly. At 120 volts, he shouted that the shocks were becoming painful. Painful groans were heard at the 135-volt level, and at 150 volts, the "learner" cried that he wanted to be released because of a heart disturbance. Cries of this type were repeated with each succeeding higher level until at 180 volts, the "learner" cried out: "I can't stand the pain"; and by 285 volts, his response to the shock was an agonized scream. At 300 volts, he shouted that he would no longer provide answers to the test. The two confederates appeared to remain indifferent to the "learner's" complaints throughout the experiment.

The results, as depicted in Figure 18-2, show that there was a marked tendency for the naive subjects to go along at least part way with the stooges' recommendations. The subjects in the control group who worked alone and who, like the experimental subjects, were free to administer any shock they wished, tended to administer shocks at the 50-volt level, on the average. There was a considerable degree of variation in the shocks administered by the forty experimental subjects. Three never gave over 30 volts, but ten reached the 405-volt level and seven actually went along with the two stooges' recommendations all the way to 450 volts.

An analysis of the background of the experimental subjects showed the usual social-class effects, with persons having high school education or less complying with the stooges' suggestions to a greater extent than subjects with some college education.

Milgram's experiments have been replicated under a number of conditions, with essentially similar results. David Mark Mantell (1971), for instance, conducted a series of "shocking" experiments in Munich, West Germany, and found no essential difference between German and American subjects in their willingness to administer "shock" at the levels demanded by the experimenter.

The conditions that prevail in such experiments are consistent with the six conditions we listed earlier that facilitate the translation of prejudice into aggression. The "victim" in these experiments is a "learner" and is, therefore, at a lower status level than the "teacher." He makes mistakes and hence is preceived as having "deserved" or "earned" his punishment. Society, as represented by the experimenter, designates the channel through which institutionalized aggression should take place: electric shock. In effect, the naive subject becomes the agent whereby society aggresses against the individual who has been "prejudged" and assigned to a status where he can behave like an inferior. In the second experiment, the

naive subject actually collaborates with society's agents in determining the level of aggression at which prejudice can most effectively be expressed.

The first experiment produced, as we have noted, a high degree of distress on the part of some subjects. In this experiment, subjects were given to understand that they had no choice about administering even higher levels of shock, whereas in the second they were told they could decide for themselves. The apparent choicelessness in the first experiment probably contributed to their distress by making them feel helpless. In this situation, their behavior is somewhat analogous to that of the apartment-house owner who tells the Negro couple in an obviously apologetic and embarrassed tone that he would like to rent an apartment to them but that the other tenants (or the community) would object. This may or may not be true, but he has never put his belief to the test and acts as though it were, in fact, true. The first experiment's subjects and the apologetic apartment-house owner regard themselves as the instruments of society who are charged with administering sanctions that they do not agree with. Hence their distress.

### *Motivational factors in experimentally induced aggression*

One question that often arises whenever experiments of the Milgram type are discussed is the extent to which the subject's behavior is the result of conformity (or obedience) and a "need to aggress." The evidence that it is the former rather than the latter comes from the fact that subjects generally shocked at a very low level when there was no pressure to conform. In this condition, they may be said to be responding to an unspoken social norm that prohibits the willful infliction of pain on others: aggression. The argument, however, that something more than conformity may be involved in the experimental condition is suggested by the fact that

there was some variation in the extent to which subjects conformed under social pressure. Undoubtedly, some of this can be attributed to individual differences in willingness to resist conformity, but individuals also differ in aggressive drives. Donald P. Hartmann (1969) gave male adolescent delinquents an opportunity to deliver "shock" to a "learner" via an apparatus somewhat similar to that used by Milgram. Those subjects who had a record of highly aggressive offenses (e.g., strong-armed robbery and assault) tended to give more shock than other delinquents. Kurt Haas (1966) conducted a study in which lower-level managerial and supervisory personnel attending a training conference were told that top management had determined that the middle-management of the company should be shaken up and "revitalized," and that something radical had to be done in order to ensure that "this incompetence does not continue." The subjects were then given the task of evaluating critically and anonymously 23 of their own supervisors and indicating which of them should be dismissed. On completion of this task, each subject took the Siegel Manifest Hostility test, a measure of a broad spectrum of hostile behavior and attitudes, and turned it in with his recommendations. An analysis of subjects' responses showed a high positive correlation (.52) between hostility scores and compliance with the punitive order to nominate superiors to be fired. Subjects who complied had a mean hostility score of 37, whereas those who refused to comply had a mean score of 23. Haas concluded that the willingness to comply with an order to aggress may be motivated by a need to aggress, as well as by a need to obey.

### *Stigma and the justification of aggression*

In Chapter 5 we described Zimbardo's (1970) concept of deindividuation, whereby persons relinquish some of their individuality by looking

to the group for cues as to how they should behave and thus take less responsibility for their actions. For the subjects in Milgram's research, the experimental situation had deindividuating effects, in that their usual inhibitions against aggression no longer functioned. In Zimbardo's experiment, which also made it possible for subjects to "shock" a "victim," deindividuating was accomplished by putting hoods over the heads of his subjects.

We also noted that aggression against a victim can be facilitated if the victim is deindividuated as well as the aggressor. In the Milgram experiments, this was accomplished partly by placing the victim in the next room, where he could not be seen. His deindividuation was also facilitated, as we indicated, by making the victim a learner and an inept one as well. In this sense, the deindividuation of the victim was accomplished by giving him a stigma.

There are many in our society who are stigmatized: the handicapped, the poor, the black, the young, the mentally retarded, the old, etc. Common sense and the conventional wisdom hold that the typical reaction to the stigmatized individual is one of pity, protection, and consideration, rather than of aggression. The results of experiments suggest that the facts are likely to be otherwise.

The classic study of the relationship between stigmata and aggression is an experiment conducted by Farina, Holland, and Ring (1966), in which naive subjects, as in Milgram's experiment, were directed to serve as teacher-shockers in a "learning experiment." Before the learning session, the "learner" was introduced to the naive subject on the grounds that "the more a teacher knows about someone, the more effectively and rapidly he can communicate with him" [p. 423]. The "learner" was then asked to tell something about himself. In each instance, the "learner" described his childhood and his recent past as an adult. In one experimental condition, the "learner" told of a trou-

bled childhood, and mentioned parental divorce and being sent to live with grandparents. The corresponding adult condition had the "learner" say that he had experienced a nervous breakdown and had been in a hospital for a while, but that he had made a reasonable recovery and was now getting good grades in college. Both the descriptions of a troubled childhood and a troubled adulthood were counterbalanced with descriptions of an untroubled childhood and an untroubled young adulthood in control conditions.

In the "teaching-learning" experience that followed, the "shocks" that the naive subjects serving as "teachers" gave the "learner" were of the lowest intensity and the briefest, if the "learner" had described a normal childhood and adulthood. "Learners" who had described a troubled childhood and/or troubled adult experiences received more intense and longer shocks. In their responses to postexperiment questionnaires, furthermore, subjects indicated less interest in getting to know or in working with "learners" who had confessed to having a troubled background. The stigma of poor mental health, instead of leading to greater kindness and consideration of the part of the subjects, led to increased aggression and rejection.

The results of this study are quite consistent with Milgram's research and the other studies we have described. Attaching a stigma to an individual deindividuates him to some degree and facilitates aggression against him, because, as Goffman (1963) has put it: ". . . . we believe that the person with a stigma is not quite human" [p. 5]. Victims, in other words, become nonpersons.

### *Aggression in a "just world"*

It is possible that we find it easier to aggress against stigmatized individuals, because of a feeling that the world is an orderly, just place, and that somehow such people "deserve" their

stigma, as well as the treatment they receive because of it.

Support for this disturbing idea comes from some research by Melvin J. Lerner and Carolyn H. Simmons (1966) who conducted an experiment in which a naive subject watched what she thought was another student being shocked for errors made while learning a list of nonsense syllables. The other student was, of course, a confederate who was not shocked at all, but who gave a realistic performance. The subjects then filled out a questionnaire designed to measure the impression the other student made on them. Under one of the experimental conditions, the subjects were informed that the experiment was now over; under another condition, they were told that they would see her shocked a second time. Results showed that subjects expressed more rejection for the "victim" when they believed that she would be shocked again and that they were powerless to help her. Whereas the subjects in Milgram's first experiment expressed their concurrence with society's evaluation of the victim by administering more electric shock when ordered to do so, these subjects expressed their concurrence by rejecting and devaluing the victim. Any other option would have increased cognitive dissonance for them. If they believed that she was a worthy person, a person like them, they would feel guilty for not having taken some steps (perhaps volunteered in her place or raised an objection) to keep her from being shocked. Since they had taken no such steps, the easiest way to avoid responsibility or guilt feelings (which would have led to an increase in cognitive dissonance) was by deciding that she probably deserved the treatment she received.

Lerner and Simmons encountered an interesting result with one of their experimental conditions, in which the victim protests that she does not want to be shocked, but is persuaded by the experimenter on the grounds that participating as a subject in an experiment is a

course requirement, and the other student will not get the credit if she does not go through with the experiment as planned. The victim then generously agrees to participate. In this situation, the victim appears in the role of a martyr who agrees to suffer if it will benefit the group. The victim then leaves and the rest of the experiment proceeds as in the other conditions. The ratings of the victim made by subjects under the "martyr" conditions are the lowest of all the experimental conditions, thus indicating the maximum rejection. The experimenters suggest that these perplexing findings show that people have a strong need to feel that this is a good and just world and that the martyr's suffering threatens this need more than the suffering of less nobly motivated people. It is also likely that the willingness of the martyr to suffer on behalf of the subjects created even more cognitive dissonance for them than did the standard experimental condition and that they had to go even further in rejecting her in order to reduce the dissonance.

### *Prejudice, hostility, and aggression as normal behavior*

Everyday life is full of examples of how people become the targets of society's hostility. The willingness of society to punish the deviant is a function of both the degree of deviancy and the status of the deviant. Generally speaking, an unimportant or slight deviancy from the social norms on the part of a low-status person is enough to evoke the use of sanctions, whereas a high-status person is treated more leniently. The situation is somewhat complicated by the fact that socially prescribed role behaviors differ at various status levels, but the trend is nevertheless a pervasive one. A judge's son and a bank president's daughter are permitted more latitude in their behavior at school than are the children of laborers. Murderers with higher social status are much more likely to escape

the electric chair or the gas chamber than are murders with lower status. The implications are rather obvious to anyone who wants to take the trouble to analyze the data, but few are so motivated.

The studies we have cited also suggest that almost anyone may commit hostile, aggressive, and prejudiced acts without feeling guilty about them, providing such behavior takes place within the context of established social norms and is thus legitimized. It is actually possible to feel virtuous and responsible as a result of such actions. The problem thus appears to be twofold—that of being willing to recognize that one is capable of hostility, aggression, and prejudice, and that of being able to recognize these trends in oneself and one's fellow group members when such actions are being carried out. These problems are difficult because the possibility of exhibiting behavior motivated by prejudice is generally inconsistent with the self-image. Furthermore, cohesiveness and norm-following are so strong that the examination of the group's motives itself becomes a kind of deviant behavior that is perceived as highly threatening to the group's morale or even to its existence.

## *Intergroup Conflict*

### *The perception of external threat*

A good example of the operation of these principles is the way in which people behave when an intergroup conflict is in preparation or is actually in progress. Interracial tensions, political campaigns, strikes, and wars are examples of intergroup conflicts. At such times, any suggestion that the motives of one's group may be suspect are treated as a form of treason. Whenever the group perceives itself as being threatened by an outside source, morale and cohesiveness are valued even more highly than

usual, and norms become highly specific and rigidly defined. Everything becomes organized in terms of defensive and offensive strategies, and activity that does not contribute to group goals may be regarded as suspect. Self-sacrifice and commitment are the order of the day, and group members outdo one another to prove their loyalty and dedication.

This problem is especially aggravated when groups are in the process of coping with a "real threat." The term "real threat" is one used by Douglas T. Campbell (1965) in describing situations in which the interests of groups (nations, for example) are in conflict with one another. The more the conflicting parties have to gain by victory, the more intense the threat is likely to become. Threat may also be aggravated by a history of past group conflict, as well as by the presence of hostile, threatening, and competitive out-group neighbors. Campbell points out that the perception of "real threat" causes hostility toward the source of the threat and that this hostility is bolstered by in-group solidarity, a greater awareness of in-group identity on the part of the members of the threatened group, and a sharper definition or "tightness" of the in-group's boundaries. Much of this comes under the heading of "ethnocentrism." Real threat also reduces defection from the group and increases tendencies to punish and reject defectors. However, once Campbell has made his points about the effects of "real threat," he goes on to say that the false perception of threat from out-groups (seeing threat where none actually exists) leads to much the same results.

### *Research into the dynamics of intergroup conflicts*

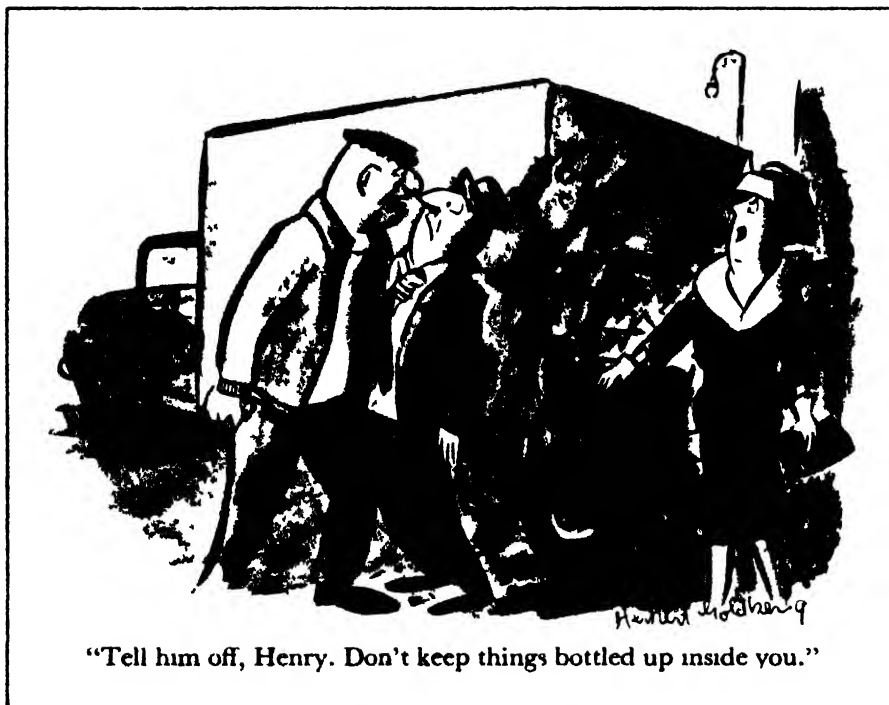
The social scientist has a difficult task during times of stress, partly because group members are especially unresponsive to social research whose findings may threaten the basis for the

coordinated functioning of the total group, and partly because the scientist, as a member of the group involved in the conflict, generally cannot avoid identifying with one side or the other. Group tension, in other words, has a polarizing effect on group members and nonmembers alike, and even though the scientist would like to maintain the kind of detachment and objectivity that the scientific method calls for, he is, after all, only human and is likely to be drawn by personal sympathies to one side or the other. Maintaining objectivity and detachment is actually hazardous, because identity and definition become crucial during times of tension: "Either you're for us or you're against us—there's no middle ground."

In spite of the polarizing effect of the forces of group cohesion, it is nevertheless possible to study the factors and conditions that aggravate or reduce intergroup hostility with the view of promoting the understanding of human behavior or of developing a fund of information that may have practical value for peacemakers and others interested in human survival. Such research can best be carried on during times when tensions are relatively low, recognizing, of course, that there will always be members in any group who will be outraged at any attempt to study hostility and prejudice scientifically. Research may also be carried on under group-conflict conditions by third parties who work under the auspices of outside, disinterested agencies, although persons operating under such conditions have problems in avoiding involvement or being labeled as favoring one side or the other.

In the light of these various considerations, social research conducted in the laboratory has a number of obvious advantages. It provides the means whereby the scientist's involvement in issues can be controlled and operations can be sheltered from an overactive public scrutiny. Most laboratory research is concerned with the formulating and testing examples of general





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principles, and this aspect of behavior is generally of less interest to the general public, whose concerns tend to be topical and immediate, rather than theoretical. Thus it is possible to conduct research into hostility, aggression, morale, and other motivational dimensions of group conflict, including war, without having to become involved in the rightness or wrongness of one side or another in an ongoing war or even in the war itself. This does not imply that psychologists tend to be personally neutral about war, for the great majority strongly oppose it. Indeed, it is the general antipathy to war that has led to much research dealing with hostility and social conflict. But when a scientist is involved in conducting research into various aspects of the basic, underlying emotion—hostility—he can function adequately and scientifically only if he plays a completely neutral and detached role.

With these considerations in mind, let us turn to research, largely taking place in the laboratory, that deals with the stimulation and control of hostility and aggression.

## *The Management and Control of Aggression*

### *Coping with hostility through catharsis*

One principle attractive to researchers is the idea that hostility can be dissipated harmlessly if it can be expressed in some nonviolent way. This approach is consistent with the frustration-aggression hypothesis (Dollard et al., 1939) we discussed earlier and assumes a kind of "hydraulic" model in which a charge of hostility becomes built up and must find some kind of outlet. Presumably, unless the pent-up hostility

finds a harmless outlet, it will explode in some aggressive act. This principle finds its expression in clinical counseling, whereby the client or patient is permitted and encouraged to "blow off steam" and thus relieve some of the pressure to "do something" about his anger and resentment. Common experience also shows that people who have been offended or insulted feel less hostile after they have had a chance to tell someone about it.

Seymour Feshbach (1955) conducted what has become a classical study of this approach to hostility reduction. He arranged for a colleague to insult a number of college classes by making derogatory remarks about their limited intellectual interests and their maturity. Other subjects were treated in a friendly manner. One of the insulted groups took a series of aptitude tests; another wrote stories for four cards selected from the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT). The first two groups thus served as control groups, whereas the third received the experimental treatment. The hypothesis that the hostility in the second group would remain high, but that it would be lowered in the third group (because of the opportunity to express hostility through fantasy), was supported by the results.

Some field research with "hard-core delinquents" also supports the idea that catharsis is an effective reducer of hostility. In this research, delinquents were paid to talk into tape recorders with the understanding that they were providing data for researchers who were interested in finding out what it was like to be a delinquent. After about a dozen sessions, the boastful mood of the subjects became subdued and there was a general improvement in their behavior (Schwitzgebel & Schwitzgebel, 1961).

Everyday experience, too, indicates that the opportunity to "get things off one's chest" often has the effect of reducing aggression. This phenomenon was observed by John L. Haer (1968) in the course of group therapy sessions. Out of 149 aggressive responses, 110 occurred

before anger was openly expressed through some kind of verbal admission, such as "I am mad," whereas only 39 occurred after the verbalization of anger. Or, analyzing Haer's data in another way, 16 out of 18 aggressive episodes occurred before the expression of anger, and only 2 afterward.

There are two sides to the open expression of anger, however. While experience shows that aggression can often be reduced through talking about one's feelings, it also shows that one can "talk oneself into a rage." Michael Kahn (1966) found that Harvard freshmen who were insulted and angered by a laboratory technician disliked their annoyer more after having had a chance to tell the latter's supervisor about their mistreatment, whereas those who remained quiet for 20 minutes and who had no opportunity to express themselves had a more favorable opinion. It may be that the fact that subjects had an opportunity to talk to a high-status person may have something to do with the difference between Kahn's results and those of the other two studies we have cited.

Leonard Berkowitz (1962) delineates three types of difficulties with catharsis as a theoretical construct:

1. Acts of hostility may be followed by weaker or less frequent aggressive responses not because hostility has been relieved by catharsis but because of guilt or anxiety on the part of the attacker brought on by his initial hostile actions.
2. The attacker may be frustrated further or may stimulate himself to continued aggression.
3. Hostility may be dissipated if the original anger-inciting frustration has been eliminated.

Research performed in recent years presents mixed results with respect to the the question of whether the opportunity to aggress reduces hostility. One group of studies has found that the opportunity to express aggression directly to a frustrator was followed by a reduction in

tension as measured by physiological indicators of tension (Hokanson, Burgess, & Cohen, 1963; Berkowitz, 1962). Another study using similar methods, however, showed that subjects who were not permitted to aggress reduced their physiological arousal level more than those who were allowed to do so (Holmes, 1966). Some of the differences in results may be accounted for by the fact that the latter study used only female subjects, whereas the other studies used mixed-sex groups. But the lack of agreement does raise questions about the value of catharsis as an easy and obvious means of controlling aggressive tendencies and suggests that other means be explored as well.

### *Televised violence and aggression*

In recent years, there has been a great deal of research with respect to the effect that watching televised or filmed violence has on subsequent behavior. Part of the impetus for this research has come from psychologists' interest in unravelling ambiguous research results of the type just reported, in an attempt to answer the question: "Does the viewing of violence have an arousing or an inhibiting effect on subsequent behavior?" Two theories would suggest that one would expect more aggression. One is that arousal of any kind can lead to aggression, provided aggressive cues are present in the environment; the other theory is that actors in scenes of violence can serve as models for social learning. The contrary theory, of course, is that life is full of frustrating experiences that ordinarily can lead to aggression, and watching filmed or televised violence is a harmless form of catharsis.

Interest in this type of research has, of course, been expressed by groups of parents, psychiatrists, and civic leaders, who attribute at least some of the steadily rising rate of violent crime to the kind of entertainment available to children.

A number of studies support the idea that arousal enhances aggressive behavior. Russell G. Geen and Edgar C. O'Neal (1969) showed male subjects brief film clips depicting either aggressive boxing or nonaggressive sport. The subjects were then asked to evaluate the problem-solving performance of a confederate by administering an electric shock at a level determined by them. In half the shock conditions, subjects also were subjected to "white noise," a continuous, irritating tone. Results showed that subjects in the white-noise condition, and who had also seen the aggressive boxing film, delivered the highest level of shock. In other words, the more the arousal, the more the aggression.

Dolf Zillmann (1971) showed subjects one of three types of film clips: neutral, aggressive, and erotic. Following this experience, they were instructed to shock a "learner" for errors. The strongest "shocks" were administered by subjects who had seen the erotic film, followed by those who had seen the aggressive film. There is no question but that the erotic film clip was the most arousing of the three; this was confirmed by physiological responses as measured by changes in blood pressure, heart rate, and skin temperature. Zillmann's study shows that for adult subjects, overall arousal is a more potent facilitator of aggression than is the imitation of aggressive models. He also failed to find any cathartic effect. Shocks were delivered in four blocks or stages. The two groups of aroused subjects increased the shock level with each succeeding block. In other words, the administration of shock at a certain level did not lead subjects to reduce it on the next opportunity, as catharsis theory might suggest; instead, it diminished inhibitions against shocking. It could be argued, of course, that catharsis theory would not apply here, inasmuch as the subjects had no reason to be hostile toward the "learner."

Studies of the effect of televised violence

tend to support the popular idea that it increases aggression among children, although results are far from clear-cut. Paul Cameron and Christine Janky (1971) asked parents of kindergarten children in the River Rouge School District in Michigan to cooperate in a field experiment, in which children were placed on a television "diet" of violent or passive television. The dependent variable consisted of changes in children's behavior disturbance (including aggressiveness and fighting) as reported by parents. Behavior changes were reported for 21 out of 66 children in the violent television group, with 3 of this 21 changing for the better. In the passive television group, 15 out of 66 children showed changes, with 8 showing changes for the worse, and 7 for the better. The authors concluded that televised violence in this experiment was a likely source of increased behavior pathology in the children, although they also noted that it was difficult to control the stimulus manipulation (children watched television in homes that were not participating in the experiment, for example), and that some question could be raised about the validity of parental reports of behavior pathology.

A better controlled investigation of the effect of televised violence on aggressiveness was conducted by Leonard D. Eron and others (1972), who collected data on television viewing preferences and aggression from over four hundred subjects at two points in time: when they were about 9 and again when they were about 19. This longitudinal approach gave the researchers an excellent opportunity to determine whether preferences for televised violence at age 9 would have any effect on behavior at that age or ten years later. Aggressiveness was measured by peer ratings at both ages, supplemented by each subject's own report on his antisocial behavior at age 19. There was the usual finding of greater aggression among the males, with the differences being most pronounced when the subjects

were 19 years old. The results show that for males, preferences for televised violence at age 9 were correlated at a low positive level with aggressiveness at that age, and at a higher level with aggressiveness at age 19. The corresponding correlations for females were negligible. The investigators argue that for males, television preferences at age 9 were the best single predictor of aggressiveness at age 19, although one should also note that the correlation between 9-year-old preferences and 19-year-old antisocial behavior was a nonsignificant .10, and that television viewing preferences of females were not significantly correlated with anything.

The relationship between televised violence and aggression becomes somewhat confused when one considers the results of a field experiment conducted by Seymour Feshbach and Robert D. Singer (1971), who regulated the amount of televised violence viewed over a six-week period by boys aged 9 to 15, who were living in homes for the underprivileged and in residential private schools. Some groups watched violent programs featuring gangsters, outlaws, the FBI, and the like, while others saw nonviolent programs, such as family situation comedies, variety shows, and *Lassie*. Dependent variables were the number of aggressive or antisocial acts initiated by the subjects. Here are some of the findings:

1. There were no significant differences between the two groups of subjects with respect to cursing and swearing, destruction of property, and breaking of rules.
2. The subjects who watched the nonviolent programs were engaged in more than twice as many fist fights as those who watched violent programs.
3. The nonviolent-program group engaged in 859 loud, angry arguments, whereas the control group engaged in only 456.
4. The greatest proportionate reduction in

aggressive behavior occurred with boys whose scores on various measures of manifest aggression and hostility were above the median for the group.

This latter finding would suggest that highly aggressive boys have some kind of a "need" for fantasy violence, a need that leads to increases in acts of interpersonal aggression if it is not satisfied.

The results of the research on televised violence are admittedly confusing. If anything, they show that the relationship between children's interpersonal behavior and what they watch on television is not the simple one suggested by common sense. Although no one would seriously argue with the desirability of reducing the level of violence in the television programs children watch, by the same token few would argue that such a move would have a corresponding effect on the level of interpersonal or intergroup aggression in our society. We turn now to other approaches.

### *Aggression and social learning*

To a highly significant degree, we learn to be the persons we become. This is the point that we made in Chapter 4 and is a theme that we have reiterated on a number of occasions throughout this book. If the major trends in personality emerge during the childhood years, as appears to be likely, then it is in childhood that we should look for the kind of social learning that leads to differences in aggressiveness in later years.

Boyd R. McCandless (1967) grants that aggressiveness is universally found among children, particularly at younger ages, but questions the desirability of adopting a permissive attitude toward it. First, there is little place in civilized, cooperative living, he notes, for direct, primitive expression of aggression. Disguised or diluted forms of aggressiveness are less disruptive, but even such behavior can be disturbing to good

interpersonal relations. Second, research studies show that the relief from tension that follows angry, aggressive behavior is likely to reinforce aggression, rather than suppress it. Third, behaving aggressively does not reduce tendencies to aggress, but increases them. In the study by Zillmann (1971), subjects expressed an increasing amount of aggression with each succeeding stage of the experiment.

Although parental permissiveness tends to reinforce and thus to encourage aggressive behavior, punitivity appears to have a similar effect. Sears, Maccoby, and Levin (1957) found that parents who made considerable use of physical punishment had children who were more aggressive. Indeed, the finding that parental punitivity and aggressiveness are positively correlated is a routine finding. One study of men who had been convicted of crimes characterized by a high degree of violence showed that they were more likely to have been punished severely by their parents than were men who had grown up in the same depressed residential area but who did not have criminal records (McCord, McCord, & Howard, 1963). If we follow the line of reasoning developed by Bandura and Walters (1963), it would appear that the aggressive behavior of the parents, as expressed through their punitivity, served as a model for their sons' behavior. It is not surprising that men who were unable to exercise control over their antisocial impulses had parents who also were unable to control their anger and expressed it through severe physical punishment. Children cannot learn self-control if adequate models are not available.

It appears from what we have said that there is no way that parents can help children control aggressiveness: permissiveness encourages aggressiveness, but so does punitivity. The contradiction is more apparent than real, however. The parent who firmly controls his child's aggressiveness, but does not resort to extreme measures in doing so, is the one who com-

municates rational social values to the child and at the same time sets himself up as a reasonable model for the child's behavior

### *Social norms and control of aggression*

The parent who adopts a firm but moderate attitude toward his child's aggression informs the child as to the norms of society and enables him to incorporate them into his repertory. Social norms, as we pointed out in Chapter 11, hold groups together and enable them to develop cohesiveness. Some norms in urbanized societies become codified in the form of laws, governmental procedure, and organizational structure. Irrespective of the amount of good will and altruism that the members of a society have learned to express, conflicts of interest are bound to occur. The fact that car owners carry insurance takes care of situations in which drivers' interests conflict and accidents result. Laws regarding individual liberties take care of situations in which the individuals and society's interests are in conflict, for they specify what is fair and equitable for all concerned. A householder may not play his hi-fi at top volume until 3 A.M., but the law may not interfere with his buying and listening to a recording of Angela Davis reading Frantz Fanon, if he wants to.

There is always an area of instability and vagueness when it comes to individual rights that run counter to society's mores, and in any society that has a norm of being genuinely concerned about the rights of individuals, this area is under continual review and redefinition. The point is, however, that much aggression is averted or thwarted because it is counter-norm. The problem in a community and a nation appears to be partly that of developing statements of norms (laws and customs) which are mutually and internally consistent, and which protect both society and the individual from acts of aggression, and partly that of enabling people to become participants in a cohesive soci-

ety. If people feel that they are genuine participants, they will have less difficulty accepting society's norms as guidelines for their behavior.

### *Norms for international behavior*

It is very likely that the same principles would work on the international level, as well as on the community and national level. Groups of nations are less cohesive than are groups comprising a nation that has a high degree of self-identity. Similarly, some of the new, emerging nations lack internal cohesiveness and have not as yet developed norms that are generally accepted by the subgroups they comprise. The presence or absence of strong norms is both a cause and an effect of the amount of cohesiveness present. The development of norms of international behavior grows in part out of necessity. Regulations governing maritime and aviation transportation are one example of norms that have a high degree of acceptance among nations. Radio transmission, the passage of mails, and regulations governing sports are examples of international norms that have somewhat less influence but are in process of development, and there are many others. Participation in the United Nations is a kind of norm that has different meaning for different countries. International trade and the need to exchange information of a technical nature also contribute to the development of international norms.

The opening up of channels of communication actually precedes the development of norms, because a nation must be informed about other nations before it can become interested in cooperating. It follows also that channels of communication expand and extend themselves in support of norms, because norms that exist on a fairly abstract level, as international norms do, require a great deal of communication.

If nations continue to expand their base of interaction, they will inevitably develop stronger, more extensive, and more complex com-

munication and norm networks. Such a development will not, of course, proceed without setbacks and complications. Some nations may deliberately isolate themselves from participation in such networks, preferring not to benefit from them. Other nations will isolate themselves in a selective way, as the Arab countries have from Israel, and as Albania has from the rest of Europe. Some nations, such as Sweden, will participate more actively in the development of norms, whereas others, such as Paraguay or Yemen, will participate only marginally.

One possible side effect of the strengthening of norms and channels of communication will be an eventual reduction in international aggression or war. The rapidity with which this reduction can take place depends on the extent to which nations are willing to commit themselves to norm building. Nations that are less committed constitute more of a threat to international cohesiveness than the more committed nations, and if small-group research can be extrapolated to the international level, one would predict that nations that isolate themselves from others, or that behave in counternorm ways, will eventually become subject to more pressure than will nations that are participating in the development of norms. Some of this pressure may take the form of military action, as for example, the presence of United Nations troops in Cyprus and in the former Belgian Congo. If patterns of international cooperation are strong enough, these actions should be of relatively short duration. The events of the past few years suggest, however, that the will to cooperate and to participate in international norm building is still quite weak.

To put this into slightly different terms, the ability of man to avoid destructive wars depends on his willingness to participate in the development of an international organization—of a structure, that is, composed of norms, channels of communication, regulations, and so forth,

just like an organization composed of people. If such an organization is to be successful, it should derive its main impetus from the needs of the nations and people that compose it. It will be more functional if it is based on positive motives—such as the need of people for freer, richer, and more stimulating patterns of living—than on negative ones, such as the need to eliminate war or a war-maker. Defensive motives may mobilize energy more rapidly, but they are also likely to burn themselves out quickly, whereas group-building motives, although they are less dramatic and often become subordinated in times of stress, have more staying power. Group-building needs are, as we pointed out early in the book, basic and fundamental to human behavior. To use the words of Katz and Kahn (1966), implementing such needs and creating the necessary organizations emphasize "an ethic from below based on social experience." The actions that become legitimate in the developing of organizations, therefore, take on "the pragmatic meaning of observing traffic rules rather than obeying a moral imperative."

## *Summary*

Although aggression can be broadly defined as characteristic of a range of behavior, including attempts to master a task, most psychologists use the term in a restricted sense to apply to actions with intent to injure others. Three basic ways we can relate to others are through moving toward them, away from them, and against them. Social systems are maintained primarily by movement toward others, and movement against others is generally considered to be a threat to the group. At times, however, movement against others may contribute to cohesiveness. This is likely to occur during intergroup competition or when the movement is

directed against those considered to be threats to the group.

Movement against others is generally viewed as aggression motivated by hostility. According to one widely accepted theory, aggression is the result of frustration. The frustration-aggression theory, however, does not take into account aggression that occurs in the absence of anger, the fact that frustration may lead only to a readiness to aggress, the need for appropriate cues, and learned habits that lead to aggression in the presence of appropriate cues even when there is no frustration. Kaufmann considers aggression as action against others with intent to injure, a definition that covers the use of the word in this chapter.

There is a controversy among psychologists as to whether aggression is an acquired or an instinctive response. On the surface it appears to be adaptive and hence instinctive, but this does not explain why aggressive drives are often strongest when the aggressor has ceased to aggress or why they are stronger in some cultures than in others. Instinct-type explanations of aggression on the basis of territoriality also do not explain why overcrowding usually leads to apathy and only occasionally to aggressiveness. The safest conclusion is that although the basis for aggression may be biological, capacity for learning produces much variation in the way frustration is perceived and reacted to.

Research with infants and young children shows that tendencies to perceive and react to threat appear quite early. Children actually seem to be more interested in aggressive, violent themes than in friendly ones. One possible explanation may be that such violent themes are more stimulating, hence are more interesting. Middle-class people tend to express less direct physical aggression than do lower-class people, because the former have more access to social devices that resolve interpersonal differences and because they value impulsivity

less. Invidious comparisons between the unemployed and the employed poor also provoke more aggressive crime during periods of business prosperity. Some research suggests that authoritarian child-rearing practices lead individuals to identify with punitive authorities, whereas democratic practices lead to identification with benign authorities.

Aggression may be institutionalized or personalized. Institutionalized aggression may take the form of punishment of lawbreakers, warfare, or organized violence. Institutionalized aggression appears legitimate to the society on whose behalf it occurs, whereas personalized aggression does not. Persons who engage in severe forms of personalized aggression are likely to be considered enemies of society and to be dealt with accordingly.

Intergroup aggression may be based on prejudice, whenever society or a cultural group has designated some readily identifiable group as a suitable target for stereotyped, negative attitudes. In most instances, the target group is different from the dominant group in a way that is felt to be significant and also appears vulnerable. Prejudiced attitudes are perceived as legitimate and are supported by stereotyped beliefs which are learned, usually during childhood. Furthermore, society generally provides some channel for the expression of hostility toward target persons. Some studies show that differences in belief systems provide the most important basis for prejudice, and that similarity in beliefs may counteract prejudice. However, the fact that dominant groups evaluate targets of prejudice in terms of a stereotyped set of beliefs, and interact with the target individuals as little as possible, makes it difficult for dominant groups to be aware of the similarities that do exist.

Milgram's research dealing with conditions under which a naive subject will "shock" a "learner" who persists in making errors gives indications that many people will go to



extremes in complying with demands that they aggress. Willingness to conform is undoubtedly a major factor in such behavior, but a need to aggress may also be involved. Punishment is also facilitated by the fact that the learner has a low status, behaves in an inadequate manner, and is, in a sense, stigmatized and deindividuated. This conclusion is supported by research in which target persons reporting mental health problems received more "shock" than "normal" subjects. Higher levels of aggression toward stigmatized persons are also justified by the subject's belief that in a just world, people get what they deserve.

When groups are threatened by one another, they may engage in active forms of aggressiveness. At such times it becomes difficult for the social scientist to maintain objectivity, particularly if he is identified with one side or another. Social research conducted in the laboratory has obvious advantages at such times, because hostility and aggression can be studied in isolation from the real conflict. Some early research with hostility has shown that it can be reduced by catharsis, that is, through finding some way of expressing it, rather than suppressing or repressing it. More recent research has raised questions about the value of catharsis.

Research with the effect of televised violence on children has produced mixed findings. One study shows that it leads to increases in behavior pathology in kindergarteners; another finds preferences for violent television programs at age 9 one of the better predictors of aggressiveness at age 19, but for males only; still another study found that a diet of television violence

helped reduce interpersonal aggressiveness among preadolescent boys. A major finding, on which there is little disagreement, is that states of arousal are likely to lead to increased aggressiveness on the part of viewers. As far as child-rearing practices are concerned, permissiveness and severe punishment both increase tendencies to behave aggressively. Permissiveness has a reinforcing effect, whereas punitivity provides the child with an aggressive adult model. Firm, but not punitive, standards seem to be indicated in dealing with misbehavior.

Cohesiveness in social contexts is based on the acceptance of norms, which have the effect of enabling members of society to deal with interpersonal conflicts in nonaggressive ways. One of the difficulties in controlling aggression on the international level through appropriate norms is that groups of nations tend to be less cohesive than national groups. However, some international norms are developing out of nations need to have some kind of control over their interaction with one another. The opening of channels of communication also has positive effects. Reduction in international aggression will take place to the extent that nations are willing to commit themselves to norm building as a part of developing an organization of nations. This task is likely to be more successful if it is based on positive motives, like the desire for the good life, rather than on negative ones, like the elimination of war or war-makers. These organizations work best when based on such practical motives as the need to have and to observe traffic rules, rather than on obeying moral imperatives.





# Subject Index

- Acetylcholinesterase, 32
- Achievement, need for, *see* Need for achievement (n Ach)
- Acquaintanceship, and balance theory, 161–164
  - in Germans and Americans, 339
- Acquaintanceship process, 55–56, 67
- Administrators, as leaders, 383–384
- Affiliation, need for, *see* Need for affiliation (n Aff)
- “Afro” hair-do, reactions to, 61
- Aggression, and authoritarianism, 96, 100
  - and belief in a “just world,” 447–448
  - biological bases of, 435–437
  - and child-rearing patterns, 439–440
  - as controlled by norms, 455–456
  - cultural attitudes toward, 439–440
  - defined, 433–434
  - and deindividuation, 101
  - as dependent variable, 442–448
  - fantasy expressions of, 437–438
  - and hostility, 434–435

- Aggression** (*continued*)  
 in infancy and childhood, 437-439  
 instinct explanations of, 436-437  
 institutionalized and personalized, 440-441  
 as justified by stigma, 446-447  
 and its management, 433-457  
 origins of, 437-441  
 and overcrowding, 436  
 and perception of external threat, 448-449  
 and sex differences, 437  
 stimulus value of, 438  
 symbolic expression of, 441  
 territorial explanations of, 436  
 and violence, 433-434
- Aggressiveness**, in American and Mexican children,  
 256  
 sex differences in, 212-213
- Alcohol**, use of, 101
- Alcoholism**, 239
- Allport, F. H.**, 14
- Altruism**, 32, 129-132, 374
- American Civil Liberties Union**, 16
- American core values**, 265-266
- American culture**, 82-86, 249-271
- Americans for Democratic Action**, 16
- American Federation of Scientists**, 16
- American Indian adolescents**, 322-323
- American Indians**, *see* Cross cultural references,  
 as well as the names of specific tribal groups
- Americans**, as perceived by  
 Arabs, 286, 289  
 Chinese, 256-257  
 Filipinos, 256-257  
 French, 254  
 Greeks, 282-283  
 Japanese, 284-285
- Anger**, 434-435
- Anti-Semitism**, 98
- Antisocial motives**, sex differences in, 207
- Anxiety**, defenses against, 231, 236-237  
 and social mobility, 193-194
- Appearance**, as a factor in attraction, 52-54, 58-60
- Approach behavior**, 38-39
- Arab children**, 262-263
- Arab-Israeli War (1967)**, 156-157
- Arabs**, 156-157, 262-263  
 as perceived by Americans, 286, 289
- Arapesh**, 210-211, 212
- Architects**, creativity in, 239
- Aristocracies**, 348
- Aristotle**, 13
- Association motives**, 29-48  
 classical explanations of, 30  
 instinct explanations of, 31-32  
 instrumental explanations of, 30
- Attention from others**, as a reinforcer, 74-76
- Attire**, effect on attractiveness, 61
- Attitude similarity**, and interpersonal attraction,  
 55-61
- Attitudes**, centrality of, 93  
 toward Chinese, 91-92  
 conflicts in, 91-92  
 consistency in, 93  
 defined, 90  
 dimensions of, 93-94  
 as influenced by position and status, 170  
 law and order, 95, 96  
 learning of, 84-86  
 measurement of, 92-96  
 and needs, 102  
 toward religion, 93-94  
 salience of, 93  
 toward sex, 92  
 unobtrusive measures of, 95  
 ways of measuring, 94-96  
 and yielding behavior, 127-129
- Attraction** interpersonal, 51-71, 233  
 and appearance, 52-54, 59-60  
 and complementarity, 62-63  
 and frequency of exposure, 63-67  
 price of, 132-133  
 and propinquity, 63-64  
 and similarity, 54-67
- Attribution theory**, 308-309, 341
- Australians**, 267
- Authoritarianism**, 96-99  
 and acquaintanceship behavior, 163  
 Berkeley study of, 97-98  
 and radicalism, 98  
 and social-class differences, 183, 195-196
- Autistic behavior**, in everyday life, 134
- Autocratic leaders**, 315
- Autokinetic effect**, 121-122
- Autonomy**, need for, 415-416  
 in organizations, 421-423
- Avoidance behavior**, 40-41

- Balance theory, 157-166, 233
- Bentham, J., 13
- Bible, as social document, 13
- Birth order, and friendship, 243
  - and leadership, 244
  - and the need to associate with others, 47
  - and parental attention, 244-245
  - and personality, 242-245
  - and socializing experiences, 243-244
  - and socially oriented responses, 259
  - and success, 242-243
- Black children, and black teachers, 275
  - and self-esteem, 235
  - and self-rejection, 278
- Blacks, contacts with whites, 310-311
  - interpersonal distances among, 294, 296
  - as perceived by whites, 291-292
- Black-white relations, 321
- Brainstorming, 119-120, 358
- Bureaucracies, 410-411
- Bureaucrat, as leader, 384
  
- Cannabis, 101, 237-238
- Capital punishment, 91
- Caste, 171-173, 348
- Catalan language, 314
- Catastrophe, reactions of different ethnic groups to, 264-265
- Catharsis, and fantasy behavior, 451
  - and hostility, 450-451
- Charisma, 385
- Child-parent relations, and self-esteem, 235
- Child-rearing patterns, and aggression, 454
  - and attitudes toward aggression, 439-440
  - democratic and authoritarian, 439-440
  - and social class, 182-187
- Children, and attraction to themes of violence, 437-438
- Chinese, 252-253, 256
- Chinese ideograms, 36-37
- Cholinesterase, 32
- Cognition, and language, 317-318
- Cognitive dissonance, 19-20, 147-157, 164-166, 309, 320, 425-426, 447
  - controversies regarding, 155-156
  - as impression management, 156
  - and international conflict, 156
  - and lying, 149
- Cognitive dissonance (*continued*)
  - and physiological changes, 152
  - and role playing, 151
- Cohesiveness, in groups, 338-343
  - and group norms, 342-343
- Common sense, and the conventional wisdom, 5-6, 8
- Communication, 301-327
  - of emotions, 287-288
  - and influence, 420-421
  - influence of status differences on, 418-419
  - and interpersonal behavior, 311
  - and organizational size, 419-420
  - in organizations, 418-422
  - and social status, 311-312
  - as a tool, 302-304
- Compartmentalization, and role conflict, 220
- Competition, in groups, 367-376
- Complex tasks, social interference in, 118-119
- Complexity, and stimulation, 33
- Compliance, and ingratiation, 133-136
- Computer dating, 52-54, 59-60
- Comte, A., 13
- Conformity, 240-241, 333-334
  - and group norms, 342-343
  - to group pressure, 444-445
  - to norms and social pressure, 120-129
  - to peer pressure, cross-cultural differences in, 255, 257-260
- Connotation, in language, 320-325
- Consideration, and leadership, 394-396
- Consonance, theories of, 156-166
- Conventional wisdom, 5-6
- Cooley, C. H., 13, 15
- Cooperation, in groups, 367-376
  - and independence, 241
- Correlational research, in social psychology, 18, 20-23
- Cows, sacred, 91
- Creativity, and birth order, 243
  - facilitation of, 337-338
  - as facilitated by brainstorming, 119-120, 358
  - and independence, 239
- Cross-cultural research, and social class, 184-187
- Cross-cultural references:
  - American Indian adolescents, 322-323
  - American managers, 416
  - Arabs, 156-157, 285-286, 289, 324, 387-388

Cross-cultural references (*continued*)

Arapesh, 210–211, 212  
 Argentinian managers, 415–416  
 Armenians, 285  
 Athens, ancient, 112  
 Australians, 267  
 Black children, 275  
 Blacks, attitudes of, 193, 294, 296  
 Brazilians, 159–160, 193  
 Canadians, 387–388  
 Catalans, 314  
 Central African tribes, 211  
 Chinese, 252–253, 256  
 Danish managers, 416  
 education, 321, 323  
 England (1550–1800), 112  
 English, 295  
 Eskimo, 142, 259–260  
 Filipinos, 256, 264, 291  
 French, 184, 253–254, 257–259, 325  
 French Canadians, 193  
 French language, 318–319  
 French managers, 416  
 future orientation, 323  
 general, 111  
 German managers, 415–416  
 Germans, 107, 267–270, 339, 348–349, 415  
 Greece, ancient, 112  
 Greeks, 184–185, 260–262, 282–283, 296  
 Hawaiians, 264–265  
 Hindi, 324  
 Hopi language, 319  
 Indian managers, 415–416  
 Iranians, 212, 400  
 Italian language, 319  
 Italian managers, 415, 416  
 Italians, 193, 290, 296, 348–349  
 Israeli, 156–157, 197, 294  
 Japanese, 85, 256–257, 264, 268–270, 283–285, 428  
 Japanese managers, 416  
 Javanese, 185–186  
 Jews, 193  
 Lebanese, 262–263, 295, 324  
 Mediterranean cultures, 142, 339  
 Mexican-Americans, 196–197  
 Mexicans, 110–111, 255–256, 291, 348–349  
 Mundugumor, 211

Cross cultural references (*continued*)

n Ach and n Aff, 323  
 Navaho language, 319  
 Navahos, 142–143, 274  
 Netherlands Dutch, 324  
 New England mothers, 252  
 New Guinea tribes, 287  
 North African immigrants to Israel, 197  
 Northern European, 142  
 Northern Irish, 267  
 Norwegian managers, 416  
 Norwegians, 257–258  
 Peru, pre-Columbian, 112  
 Puerto Ricans, 296  
 Rappahannock, 257–258  
 Russian children, 255  
 Samoan children, 142  
 Scot, 259–260, 296  
 Sephardic Jews, 313–314  
 Spanish managers, 415–416  
 Scandinavian managers, 415–416  
 Sudanese children, 267–268  
 Swedes, 258–259, 296  
 Tchumbuli, 210–211, 213  
 Tene, 259–260  
 Turks, 110  
 White Protestant, 193  
 Zuñis, 87, 212, 226  
 Crowding and aggression, 436  
 Cultural influences during childhood, 252–256  
   during infancy, 251–252  
   on personality and social behavior, 249–271  
 Culture, defined, 250  
   and sex differences, 210–213  
   and social norms, 120  
 Darwin, C., 13  
 Dating, by computer, 52–54, 59–60  
 Davis, Angela, 455  
 Deaf children, and language learning, 317  
 Decision making, and group structure, 360  
 Definition, and meaning, 45–46  
 Dehumanization, and bureaucracies, 410–411  
 Deindividuation, 101, 237–239  
 Democratic attitudes, defined, 96  
 Democratic leadership, 345, 359  
 Denotation, in language, 320–321  
 Dependent variable, 18

- Deviancy, effect on interpersonal attraction, 61
- Dewey, J., 14
- Differential research, in social psychology, 20–23
- Dissonance theory, *see* cognitive dissonance
- Dogmatism, 100–101
  - effect on empathy, 291–292
- Dominance, in leaders, 390
  - in men and women, 215
  - in task groups, 360–361
- Donne, John, 13
- Drugs, psychoactive, 101, 237–239
- Durkheim, E., 13
- Dyad, 12
  
- Economic growth, and the need to achieve (*n Ach*), 111–112
- Economists, and the conventional wisdom, 5
- Education, as perceived cross-culturally, 321, 323
- Ego defenses, 231, 236
- Ego strength, and independence, 241
- Eisenhower, D. W., 385
- Einsteinian physics, 229
- Emotions, and facial expressions, 287–288
- Empathy, 286–293
  - cross-cultural, 284–286
  - and feedback, 309–310
  - and role differentiation, 221
- Encounter groups, 428
- Enemy's enemy, perceived as friend, 164
- England, 348–349
  - (1550–1800), and *n Ach*, 112
- English people, 295
- Equalitarian attitudes, defined, 96
- Equalitarian societies, 348
- Eskimos, 142–143, 259–260
- Esteem needs, 104
- Ethnocentrism, 449
- Eupsychian management, 416
- Evaluation, social, 274–279
- Exchange theory, 275–277
- Exclusive groups, 347–348
- Expectations, and climate, 345–346
  - culturally determined, 81–82
  - and roles, 204–205
- Experimentation, in social psychology, 17–20
- Exposure, and interpersonal attraction, 63–67
- Extraversion, 390
- Eye contact, 208
  
- F scale, 97–99
- Fads, 120
  - and manias, 238–239
- Failure, fear of (FF), 106–107, 109
- False-norm research, 123–129, 257–260, 334
- Fanon, Frantz, 455
- Fantasy, and play, 336
- Fasting, and cognitive dissonance, 153
- Fear, of failure (FF), 106–107, 109
  - of strangers, 437
- Feedback, 307–310
  - and attribution theory, 308–309
  - and cognitive dissonance, 309
  - and empathy, 309–310
  - as an orienting mechanism, 307–308
  - and social pressure, 309
- Field studies, 22–24
- Field theory, and personality, 231–233
- Filipinos, 256, 264, 291
- Flying-saucer sightings, and status inconsistency, 194
- Folk psychology, 13
- Foot-in-the-door technique, 136–137
- Fraternity, status and dating, 58–59
- France, Americans' perceptions of, 322
- "Free schools," 189
- French, 184, 253–254, 257–259, 325
- French Canadians, 193
- French language, 318–319
- Freud, S., 15
- Friendship, and birth order, 243
  - and cognitive dissonance, 154
  - and similarity, 61–62
- Frustration, and aggression, 435–437
- Future orientation, in India, 323
  - and the middle class, 177
  
- Galileo, 384
- Gallup, G., 15
- Germans, 107, 267–270, 339, 348–349, 445
- Greece, ancient, and *n Ach*, 112
- Greeks, 184–185, 193, 260–262, 282–283, 296
  - interpersonal distances among, 296
  - as perceived by Americans, 282–283
- Green Bank episode, 7–8
- Group behavior, 12
- Group-decision method, 425–426
- Group dynamics, 330



- Group, effect on leader,
- Group mind, 13
- Group participation, developmental stages in, 335–338
- Group processes, 329–353
  - measurement of, 350–353
- Group structure, 359–364
- Group tension, polarizing effects of, 449–450
- Group therapy, 428
- Groups, childrens', 336–338
  - cohesiveness in, 338–343
  - cooperation and competition in, 367–376
  - defined, 329–330
  - effects of success and failure on, 341–342
  - exclusive and inclusive, 347–349
  - formal and informal, 347
  - versus individuals in task performance, 358–359
  - membership, 350
  - morale in, 343–344
  - nonparticipation in, 346
  - primary and secondary, 346–347
  - reference, 350
  - stability and change in, 331–332
  - structure of, 331
  - task performance in, 357–377
  - types of, 346–353
- Guest, roles of, 202, 205–206
- Guilt, and social control, 141–143
- Guttman scaling method, 95
  
- Hammurabi, 13
- "Hanging loose," as a syndrome, 238
- "Hashers," role conflict for, 219–220
- Hatshepsut, 380
- Hawaiians, 264–265
- Hawthorne study, 393–394, 424
- Head nods, sex differences in, 209
- Helping behavior, 129–132
- Herzl, T., 384
- Hindus, 91
- Hippies, reactions to, 61
- Hitler, A., 385
- Hobbes, T., 13
- Hopi language, 319
- Host, roles of, 202, 205–206
- Hostile press (HP), 106–107
- Hostility, and aggression, 434–435
  - and catharsis, 450–451
  - toward leaders, 387–389
- "Hygiene" factors, in work, 412–414
  
- Ideal self, 231–232
- Identity, and meaning, 44–45
  - and social learning, 81–83
- Ideograms, Chinese, 65
- Ideology, defined, 90
- Impression management, and cognitive dissonance, 156
- Inclusive groups, 347–348
- Independence, 239–242, 257–260
- Independent variable, 18
- India, interpersonal distances in, 297
- Individuation, 237
- Infancy, cultural influences during, 251–252
- Influence, 11, 19–20, 23–24, 117–144, 279–407
  - and altruism, 129–132
  - through fear, shame, and guilt, 139–143
  - through role playing, 137–139
  - as social facilitation, 117–120
  - and status and position, 171
- Ingratiation, and compliance, 133–136
- Initiation severity, effects of, 19–20
- Instinct, and aggression, 436–437
  - and association motives, 31–32
  - and sex differences, 210
- Institute for Personality Assessment and Research (IPAR), 126
- Intelligence, and empathy, 98
- Interaction, defined, 9
- Interaction orientation, in task groups, 417–418
- Interaction process analysis, 350–353
- International Harvester study, 394–396, 424
- Interpersonal behavior, 11
- Interpersonal distance, 294–297
- Interviewing methods, 21–22
- IQ, stimulation of development of, 35–36
- Iranians, 212, 400
- Irish, Northern, 267
- Israel, immigrants to, 294
- Israeli, 156–157, 197, 294
- Italian language, 319
- Italian managers, 415–416
- Italians, 193, 290, 296, 348–349
  - interpersonal distance among, 296
  
- Japanese, 85, 256–257, 268–270
  - as perceived by Americans, 283–285
  - and T-groups, 428

- Javanese, 185–186
- Job satisfaction, 412–424
- Judaean-Christian attitudes, toward sex, 83
- Justice, and aggression, 440, 447–448
  
- Kamadhenu, 91
- Kennedy, J. F., 275, 306
  - assassination of, 161
  
- Ladino, 313
- Laissez-faire leadership, 345
- Language, 313–320
  - and cognition, 317–318
  - generative theories of, 316–317
  - learning of, 316–317
  - and psychological reality, 318–320
  - and social identity, 313–315
  - as source of information and misinformation, 320–321
- Law-and-order attitudes, 95, 96
- Lazarus, M., 13
- Leaders, aristocratic and middle-class theories of, 422–423
  - as bureaucrats, 384
  - charismatic, 385
  - democratic, 359
  - effect on climate, 345
  - evaluation of, 404–405
  - as experts, 384
  - as facilitators of social learning, 401–405
  - as ideologists, 384
  - and least-preferred co-workers (LPC), 396–401
  - as models, 401
  - nonconformity in, 392
  - as parent figures, 386–387
  - personal characteristics of, 389–393
  - as policy makers, 384
  - political, 385
  - as scapegoats, 387–389
  - symbolic, 386
  - types of, 383–389
- Leadership, 379–407
  - and birth order, 244
  - and consideration, 394–396
  - defined, 380
  - as perceived by Iranians, 400
  - and social distance, 392–393
  - and structure-initiation, 394–401
  - transferability of, 382–383
  
- Learning, as facilitated by leaders, 401–405
  - and ingratiation, 133
  - of language, 316–317
  - and social dependence, 241–242
  - see also* social learning
- Least-preferred co-worker (LPC), 396–401
- Lebanese, 295, 324
- Lebanese children, 262–263
- Le Bon, G., 13
- Lewin, K., 330
- Liberals, and President Kennedy's assassination, 161
- Likability, and status, 275–277
- Likert scaling method, 94–95
- Looting, 440
- Love, as a particularistic resource, 334–335
- Lower class, 179–185
  - and women's status, 215–216
- Luther, M., 384–385
- Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), 237–239
  
- Machiavelli, N., 101
- Machiavellianism, 101–102, 152
- Machismo, 217
- Marijuana, 237–238
- Marx, K., 284
- McCarthy, Senator Joseph, 306
- McDougall, W., 13–14
- Mead, G. H., 13, 15
- Meaning, and definition, 45–46
  - and identity, 44–45
  - need for, 42–45
  - and self, 233–234
- Media, hot and cool, 306
- Mexican-American laborers, 196–197
- Mexican children, 255–256
- Mexicans, 110–111, 291, 348–349
- Middle class, 176–178
  - and women's status, 215–216
- Middle-class values, 252, 265–266
- Mixed-motive games, 372–376
- Modeling, *see* social learning
- Moede, W., 14
- Mohammed, 384
- Money, as a universalistic resource, 334–335
- Moral dilemmas, and obedience to commands to
  - aggress, 443–445
- Moral judgment, in children, 78–80
- Morale, 69
  - and group competition, 371

**Morale (continued)**

- in groups, 343-344
- "Motivation factors," in work, 412-414
- Motives, *see* social motives
- Mundugumor, 211
- Murchison, C., 14
- Nasser, President A. G., 156
- National Radio Astronomy Observatory, 7-8
- Navaho children, 274
- Navaho language, 319
- Navahos, 142-143
- Need, 41, 102-113
  - defined, 102
  - Maslow's system of, 103-104
  - for meaning, 42-45
  - and organizations, 412-418
  - for structure, 42-45
- Need for achievement (n Ach), 105-113, 176
  - in Germans and Americans, 267-268
  - and social-class differences, 192-193
- Need for affiliation (n Aff), 105, 110, 176
- Need for power (n Power), 105-106, 110-111
- Negroes, *see* blacks
- Neurosis, among immigrants, 221
- New England mothers, 252
- New Guinea tribesmen, 287
- Newtonian physics, 229
- Nixon, R. F., 306
- Nonconformity, 240-241
  - of leaders, 392
- Nonzero-sum games, 372-376
- Norms, and aggressive behavior, 440, 444-445
  - and control of aggressive behavior, 455
  - development of, 121
  - influence on perception and cognition, 120-129
  - for international behavior, 455-456
- North African immigrants to Israel, 197
- Nuclear families, 339
- Obedience, behavioral study of, 443-444
- Occupational status, and social class, 187
- Occupations, status of, 66, 70
- Office of Strategic Services (OSS), 358
- Opinion polls, 15, 21
- Organizations, characteristics of, 409-410
  - as communication systems, 418-422
  - integration of subgroups in, 420-421
  - and job satisfaction, 412-424

**Organizations (continued)**

- and meeting of needs, 412-418
- producing changes in, 422-428
- psychological processes in, 409-430
- role conflict in, 219
- types of, 411-412
- Oswald, Lee Harvey, 161
- Particularistic goals, 346
- Passivity, in Mexican and American children, 256
- Peace Corpsmen, personality traits of, 239-240
- Perception, *see* social perception
- Permissiveness, in school, 189
- Personality, cultural influences on, 249-271
  - defined, 225-226
  - and roles, 226-228
  - and the self, 228-239
  - as a social phenomenon, 225-271
- Peru, pre-Columbian, and n Ach, 112
- Phenomenal self, 232-233
- Physiological reactions, to dissonance, 152
- Piaget, J., 315, 317
- Play groups, in childhood, 336-337
- Plato, 13
- Political leaders, and needs, 105
- Position, 170-172
  - and role, 204
- Power, need for, *see* need for power (n Power)
- Prejudice, 91-92, 278-279
  - effect on empathy, 291-292
  - nature of, 441, 446-447, 448
  - reduction through contact, 293-294
  - and similarity of attitudes, 59-61
- Presidents of the United States, and needs for power
  - and achievement, 105
- Prestige, of leaders, 382
- Primary groups, 346-347
- Primate societies, 31
- Prince, M., 14
- Prisoner's Dilemma games, 372-376
- Problem solving, by groups, 349-353, 357-377
- Projective tests, 104, 107-108, 110
- Propaganda, through fear arousal, 139-141
- Prophecies, self-fulfilling, 277-282
- Propinquity, and attraction, 63-64
- Prosocial motives, sex differences in, 207-210
- Proxemics, 38-39, 294-297
  - in disturbed children, 340
- Psychoanalytic themes, 231

- Psycholinguistics, 313–320  
Psychological reactance, *see* reactance  
Puerto Ricans, interpersonal distances among, 296  
Punishment, 440  
    and children's aggression, 454  
Punitivity, and social-class differences, 195–196  
  
Questionnaires, 92, 94–95, 98–99  
  
Race prejudice, 100, 151, 441–442  
Rajput mothers, 83, 252  
Ratebreaking (ratebusting), 372, 418  
Reactance, 136  
Rebelliousness, and independence, 240–241  
Reference groups, 350  
    defined, 84  
    and social learning, 84–85  
Reinforcement, and language learning, 316–317  
Relevance, of social psychology, 15–17  
Religion, attitudes toward, 93–94  
Research, into group tensions, 449–450  
Resources, particularistic and universalistic, 334–335  
Risky shift, 364–367, 380  
Risk-taking, and need for achievement (*n Ach*), 105–107  
    and sex roles, 206–207  
Role conflict, and compartmentalization, 221  
    for "hashers," 219–220  
    for men, 217–218  
    in organizations, 219  
    and role differentiation, 221  
    for women, 218  
Role differentiation, 221  
Role playing, and cognitive dissonance, 151  
    effect on altruism, 131–132  
    as influence technique, 137–139  
Roles, 170–172, 201–233  
    and birth order, 244  
    characteristics of, 201–203  
    and climate, 345–346  
    as learned expectations, 204–205  
    in organizations, 410  
    and personality formation, 226–228  
    and positions, 204  
    prescription of, 203–204  
    reciprocal, 205–206  
    as self-affirmation, 226  
    sex, 205, 206–217  
  
Roles (*continued*)  
    as social performance, 203–204  
Romans, 129  
"Rosenthal effect," 277–278  
Ross, E. A., 14  
R-R research, in social psychology, 18–19, 20–23  
Russian children, 255  
  
Safety needs, 104  
Samoan children, 142  
School, social-class attitudes toward, 190–192  
Scots, independence of, 259–260  
    interpersonal distances among, 296  
Secondary groups, 346–347  
Self, 228–239  
    early theorists about, 13  
    flight from, 236–239  
    phenomenal, 232–233  
    psychoanalytic theories of, 231  
    role relationships, 229  
    as source of meaning, 233–234  
Self-acceptance, and independence, 241  
Self-actualization, need for, 415–416  
Self-concept, and self-image, 228–229  
    and self-structure, 232–233  
Self-esteem, 234–239  
    of black children, 235  
    and child-parent relations, 235  
Self-fulfilling prophecy, 197, 277–282  
Self-orientation, in task groups, 417–418  
Self-perception, distortions in, 236  
Self-regarding attitudes, leader's influence on, 402–403  
Self-structure, 232–233  
Self-theory, 228–239  
    and cognitive dissonance, 156–157  
    and field theory, 229–230  
Semantic differential, 321–324  
Semantic space, 323–324  
Sensitivity training, 426–428  
Sephardic Jews, 313–314  
Sex, attitudes toward, 92  
    among teenagers, 83  
Sex drives, sex differences in, 211–212  
Sex roles, 205, 206–217  
    and aggression, 212–213  
    and antisocial motives, 207  
    and changing values, 216–217  
    and culture, 210–213

- Sex roles (*continued*)
  - and dominance, 215
  - and eye contact, 208
  - and instinct, 210
  - and perception of violence, 207
  - and prosocial motives, 207–210
  - and risk-taking, 206–207
  - and smiling, 209
- Shame, and social control, 141–143
- Signature size, and social status, 21
- Similarity, and interpersonal attraction, 54–62
  - and race prejudice, 59–61
- Small-world technique, 310–311
- Smiling, sex differences in, 209
- Smith, Adam, 5, 13
- Smoking, reduction through role playing, 137–139
- "Social," derivation of word, 12
- Social attitudes, *see* attitudes
- Social behavior, and environment, 8
  - levels of, 9–12
- Social change, and social psychology, 16
- Social class, 22, 172, 174–199
  - in America, 174–184
  - and education, 187–189
  - and n Ach, 109
  - and occupational status, 187
  - and social perception, 186–187
  - and women's status, 215–216
- Social climate, 344–346, 363
- Social dependence, 239–242
- Social distance, 278
- Social environment, and man, 8
- Social exchange theory, 275–277, 332–334
- Social facilitation, of performance, 117–120
- Social influence, *see* influence
- Social instinct, 31–32
- Social learning, 73–78
  - of attitudes and values, 84–86
  - as determined by culture, 81–82
  - through imitation, 77–87
  - through modelling, 78–87
  - of motives, 84–86
  - and perceptual factors, 85–86
  - and reference groups, 84–85
  - as reinforced by others' attention, 74–76
- Social mobility, 192–195
  - and n Ach, 109
- Social motives, defined, 90
  - as influenced by status, 169–199
  - learning of, 84–86
- Social norms, *see* norms
- Social perception, 273–299
  - and norms, 120–129
- Social phenomena, defined, 4
- Social pressure, and yielding behavior, 123–129
- Social psychology, experimental methods in, 17–20
  - and general psychology, 8–9
  - history of, 12–17
  - methodology of, 17–24
  - problems and methods of, 3–26
  - relevance of, 15–17
  - and social change, 16
- Social responsibility, and independence, 241
- Social system, and position, status, and role, 170–172
- Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), 15, 16
- Sociogram, 68
- Sociological research, 22–23
- Sociology, founding of, 13
- Sociometry, 67–70
- Solon, 13
- Sorority, status and dating, 58–59
- Spain, medieval, and n Ach, 112
- Spencer, Herbert, 13
- Status, 169–199, 348
  - and communication, 311–312
  - and eye contact, 208
  - influence on communication, 418–419
  - and ingratiation, 133–135
  - as a particularistic resource, 334–335
  - and race relations, 279
  - and signature size, 21
- Status-granting, by women, 214–216
- Status inconsistencies, and flying-saucer sightings, 194
  - and emotional problems, 194
- St. Augustine, 384
- Sternthal, H., 13
- Stereotypes, 197, 279–286
  - cross-cultural studies of, 282–286
- Stevenson, Adlai, 385
- St. Francis, 385
- Stigma, and justification of aggression, 446–447
- Stimulation, need for, 32–34, 103

Stimulus-enrichment, 32–33  
 Stress, control of, 37–40  
     and the need to associate with others, 46–47  
 Structure, need for, 42–45  
     in task groups, 359–367  
 Structure initiation, 418, 423–424  
     and leadership, 394–401  
 S-R research, in social psychology, 18–19  
 Successive approximations, 77  
 Sudanese children, 262–263  
 Swedes, 258–259  
     interpersonal distances among, 296  
 Symbolic interaction, 81  
 Symmetry, strain toward, 159  
  
 Task-orientation, 416–418  
 Tchambuli, 210–211, 212  
 Teachers, students' evaluation of, 405  
 Televised violence, and aggression, 452–453  
 Television viewing, and social class, 186  
 Tension, control of, 37–40  
 Territoriality, and aggression, 436  
 Temne, 259–260  
 T-groups, 426–428  
 Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), 104,  
     107–108, 110  
 Theory X and Theory Y, 423–424  
 Threat, perception in infancy and childhood,  
     437–439  
 Thurstone scaling method, 94  
 Toffler, A., 38  
 Topology, 229–230  
 Traditional attitudes, 96, 98, 100  
 Triplett, N., 14  
 Trucking game, 374  
 Trust, interpersonal, 374  
 Tulip mania, 239  
 Turks, 110  
 Tyroleans, 314

Unidentified flying objects (UFOs), and status  
     inconsistencies, 194  
 United Nations, armed forces of, 456  
 United States Army, caste differences in, 172–173  
 Universalistic goals, 346  
 Unobtrusive methods, 20–22, 95  
 Upper class, 178–179  
     and women's status, 215–216  
  
 Value systems, defined, 90  
 Violence, and aggression, 434–435  
     cultural attitudes toward, 439–440  
     sex differences in perception of, 207  
     stimulus value of, 438  
 Volition, and cognitive dissonance, 148  
 Vygotsky, L. S., 315  
  
 Wallace, George, 95  
 War, 434, 448–450  
     as a mass movement, 239  
 Warfare, male role in, 212  
 Western Electric study, 5, 15, 393–394, 424  
 Whites, contacts with blacks, 310–311  
     as perceived by blacks, 291–292  
 Whorfian hypothesis, 318–319, 323  
 Women, and achievement drive, 318–319  
     dominance in, 215  
     influence in upper-class families, 179  
     sexual aggressiveness in, 211–212  
     social gestures by, 208–209  
     status-granting by, 214–216  
 Word-association research, 324–325  
 Working class, 179–184  
     values of, 265–266  
 Wundt, W., 13  
  
 Yielding, to social pressure, 123–129  
  
 Zúñis, 82, 212, 226